SPANISH LOVER

FRANK H. SPEARMAN

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Cordoba
Murcia
Seville
Granada
Cartagena
Algiers
Tuni
Gibraltar
ALGIERS
TUNIS
MOROCCO

MACULA CARENS
Map of the
COUNTRIES OF EUROPE
where
DON JOHN OF AUSTRIA
lived, fought and died
1747 — 1778
POLAND
ROMAN
Prague
Vienna
HUNGARY
Buda
TRANSSYLVANIA
OTTOMAN
DALMATIA
ADRIATIC SEA
BLACK SEA
Bosporus
Constantinople
MARMORA SEA
Dardanelles
NGDOM OF
Naples
NAPLES
Taranto
ALBANIA
Cortu
Gomenitza
Paxos
Prevesa
Lepanto
CALABRIA
Cephalonia
Messina
Zante
Pylos
(Navarino)
ÆGEAN SEA
EMPIRE
RHODES
Malta
Candia
CRETE
Nicosia
Famagusta
CYPRUS
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Joppa
Jerusalem
Alexandria
SCALE OF MILES
0 100 200 300 400 500
Cairo
BAISZ

Brother Philbert, c.s.c.
Notre Dame, Ind.

BY FRANK H. SPEARMAN

SPANISH LOVER
FLAMBEAU JIM
SELWOOD OF SLEEPY CAT
THE MARRIAGE VERDICT
LARAMIE HOLDS THE RANGE
NAN OF MUSIC MOUNTAIN
HELD FOR ORDERS
MERRILIE DAWES
ROBERT KIMBERLY
WHISPERING SMITH
THE DAUGHTER OF A MAGNATE
DOCTOR BRYSON

THE MOUNTAIN DIVIDE

THE STRATEGY OF GREAT RAILROADS

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

SPANISH LOVER

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BY

FRANK H. SPEARMAN

Mrs. Carl Wescott
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TO

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

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SPANISH LOVER

LEPANTO

By G. K. Chesterton

Dim drums throbbing, in the hills half heard,
Where only on a nameless throne a crownless prince has stirred,
Where, risen from a doubtful seat and half-attainted stall,
The last knight of Europe takes weapons from the wall,
The last and lingering troubadour to whom the bird has sung,
That once went singing southward when all the world was young.
In that enormous silence, tiny and unafraid,
Comes up along a winding road the noise of the Crusade.
Strong gongs groaning as the guns boom far,
Don John of Austria is going to the war,
Stiff flags straining in the night-blasts cold
In the gloom black-purple, in the glint old-gold,
Torchlight crimson on the copper kettle-drums,
Then the tuckets, then the trumpets, then the cannon, and he comes.
Don John laughing in the brave beard curled,
Spurning of his stirrups like the thrones of all the world,
Holding his head up like a flag of all the free.
Love-light of Spain—hurrah!
Death-light of Africa!
Don John of Austria
Is riding to the sea.

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SPANISH LOVER

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST SKIRMISH

Besides Carmen, two of her favorite ladies-in-waiting rode in the coach. The dark-skinned men-at-arms in caps and jerkins riding ahead were mounted on Andalusian barbs.

Following the coach, rode more ladies-in-waiting on sleek, white mules, and these were followed by a little company of dust-covered cavaliers on light Arabian mounts. But dust-covered though they were, they were richly apparelled, as befitted the escort of a princess of the blood. A western sun beat down on the tawny plain about them. It was an hour of discomfort.

Of the two cavaliers, bringing up the very rear of the procession, one was plainly tried by the journey. The heat and the dust had thrown him into a shortness of temper that he made no effort to conceal. His countenance was vexed and his words were curt.

"But you wanted to come," his more patient companion suggested.

"Is that any reason why I should like this?" expostulated de Castro unamiably, pointing with an impatient sweep of his riding-whip to the dusty road ahead.

"Is it not the price of keeping near the Princess when she moves from Madrid to Arcos?" retorted the older man with a malicious smile.

"I'm choked with this vile chalk," persisted de Castro, surging with impatience.

"Bear it," advised his companion. "A village lies just ahead. We have good sherry and good cakes for refreshment."

The cloud of dust as it arose from the cavalcade had already attracted attention from the village and particularly had engaged the curiosity of three boys making their way across a neighboring field on their way home from school. Before them a small black-and-white dog ran this way and that.

The approach of a party of highway travellers was always excitement for the village schoolboys. No sooner had the trio descried the dust in the distance than they were alert, and as the procession approached they scampered on towards the highway from which they were separated by a thick hedge and a copse of scrubby oak. One of the boys, not the biggest but the speediest of the three, racing ahead of his companions, penetrated the low copse first and peering through a gap in the aloes hedge saw the coach pass before his companions had reached the scene.

The boy was rather tall and so knit in his slender proportions and so light in movement that he appeared of but ordinary height. More noticeable was the cast of his features—the straight, slim nose, prominent because of the spareness of his long face, dominated by large, enquiring eyes. The mouth, still in the repose of early youth, seemed to question rather than to challenge the world. But as he stuck his head through the hedge and stared into the coach at the moment it drew abreast of him, he seemed to the little Princess—about his own age—reclining on its cushions, just a big shock of tousled red hair, bleached by the sun of the plains, and staring blue eyes that looked

straight through her. Slightly startled by the odd picture so suddenly framed in the close-set aloes, her petite Highness sat up among her cushions. Her head moved forward in surprise—their eyes met.

To the boy, the flash of the girlish face was overwhelming. A creature of such loveliness as looked down on him he had never conceived, dreamer though he was. His eyes opened like moons, his lips fell apart, his breath caught. Then the instant's vision passed and his two companions were crowding in close to him, struck dumb by the splendor of the passing spectacle.

All the time, the little black-and-white dog had crouched between his young master's legs as being the safest point for advance or retreat and the refuge from which the most could be seen with the least danger.

And but for the dog, nothing would now have happened and the incident need not have been recorded. But Beggar, the dog, recovering his poise before the three boys recovered theirs, set up a furious barking just at the moment that de Castro's horse was passing.

The horse, completely upset by the suddenness of the onset—for Beggar followed up his barking by dashing out of the hedge and barking louder—shied. De Castro curbed and spurred him angrily. The boy darted forward to catch the unruly terrier, now almost under the feet of the horses. As the lad caught Beggar's tail and pulled him back, de Castro, reining in his nervous horse, lashed at the dog with his whip. The dog was now in the boy's arms but the cavalier heedless of the boy's protests continued to lash at it. "Don't! Don't!" cried the boy, shielding his pet in his arms.

For answer, de Castro, reining his mount almost on top of the retreating offender, brought down his whip

on the boy's head and the lash caught the shrinking lad across the cheek.

Had a bombshell burst on the scene it could not have created more excitement. The twelve-year-old dropped his dog. His face suffused with a burst of anger that transformed it. Quicker than words could tell, he caught up the only weapon at his hand, a stone, and in a transport of fury hurled it at the enraged horseman. His aim was so true that it struck de Castro squarely in the nose; and for its purpose it was a deadly blow. De Castro's head flew back; the blood gushed from his nose. He flashed out his sword, drove his spurs into his horse to ride the offender down. But with the almost incredible quickness that had characterized the boy's every motion he had sprung into and through the hedge and headed for the oak copse, Beggar hard at his heels. His two school-fellows ran as briskly in different directions. The infuriated de Castro, his face and ruff covered with blood, drove his horse again and again at the hedge but nowhere could he find an opening to be penetrated; the thorns repelled every attempt.

Wild with rage, de Castro dashed ahead down the road to a cattle opening and, leaping his horse across the barrier, made toward the oak copse.

Riding hither and thither regardless of branches or consequences, he searched the grove. If he could catch the boy he meant to kill him; but the wretched fellow had vanished, dog and all, as completely as if the earth had swallowed him.

CHAPTER II

THE MYSTERY

A PICTURE of confusion and angry distress, the humiliated youth reached his home in the nearby village of Leganes. It was a whitewashed roadside cottage of modest pretensions, like one of the many that lined the highway in the hamlets between Madrid and the destination of the Princess and her escort. Ana, whom the lad called mother, wife of Francisco Massi, the viol player, saw the boy, weeping bitterly, coming across the garden back of the house. She met him at the kitchen door. His clothing had been half torn off in the thickets he had threaded; he was a woebegone spectacle.

"Jerome," she exclaimed in amazement, "what has happened?"

For answer, he pointed to the white welt across his cheek. He could not speak: when he tried to, the words choked in his throat. Anger, on her part, Ana knew from more than one experience, would not avail. She repressed her own resentment at his ruined jacket and tried to get the story from him. It was a long time—she was vigorously washing his face and hands—before he could bring himself to answer her many questions and say, "He struck me!"

"Who struck you?"

Jerome was still trembling with excitement. "The man on the horse, Mother! If I had had my bow I would have sent an arrow through him!"

Francisco Massi, the good-natured, easy-going viol player, husband of Ana, had wandered into the kitchen to hear the story as it progressed.

"If every man in Spain were killed because he struck a boy, few of us would be left alive," he observed philosophically. "You struck him also, didn't you? Your aim, it seems, was good. You drew blood—he failed to. I think you had the best of it, Jerry. Go play with your ships in the pond and forget your troubles till supper is ready; afterward we will have a viol lesson."

"Strange boy," mused Ana as Jerome, still inconceivably wrought up, went out of doors. "A strange boy. Long as he has been with us, I can't understand him yet. He bothers the life out of me with his busy head. Make some more ships for him to sail in the pond—he's always asking for more."

"My big mistake was making the first one for him—now he will give me no rest," complained Francisco.

Ana, stirring vigorously at a pot of lentils, turned from the table to her husband. Her brows were knit, as if some perplexing thing troubled her mind. "Francisco!" Ana with her arms challengingly akimbo now stood before her husband as he seated himself to tune his viol for practice. "Francisco!" she repeated almost accusingly. "Whose son *is* Jerome?"

Her husband answered with his usual composure; it was difficult to upset Francisco—he was a Fleming.

"Woman!" he exclaimed. "How often have I told you! Jerome—" Francisco looked out into the garden to make sure their charge was well out of hearing, "Jerome is the son of Adrian de Bues, groom of the Emperor's Chamber."

"I don't believe it!"

The musician looked up at his wife but he regarded her with patience. "You never do," he retorted quietly; "you half suspect he's *my* son."

Ana weakened. "I don't like to think *that,* Francisco. But——"

"But you do."

"I wasn't going to say that, *at all,*" protested his wife. "All I think of was that gay life at His Majesty's court when you were his favorite musician. You must admit, Francisco, this boy is full of music."

"I'm not the father of all boys that are full of music. Now let me ask *you* a question, Ana. Do you remember the document and pledge that you and I signed at Brussels when Jerome was confided to our care by Don Luis Quixada, who told us he was the son of Señor Adrian?"

"I do. But all that *proves* nothing," persisted Ana de Medina with Spanish pertinacity.

Francisco's inexhaustible patience was one of his Flemish traits. "Do you believe," he demanded calmly, "that Señor Adrian sends us *every year* all this money for the keep of *his* young Jerome or of *my* young Jerome?"

Ana was silent. She had already begun to think about making the supper ready. "Do you remember," continued her husband inexorably, "that my beloved and august Emperor, Charles, Sovereign of the Holy Roman Empire and of the Spains and Indies, spoke these words to me when I kissed his hand in taking leave of His Majesty?"

"I've heard them often enough," grumbled Ana.

"Listen to them once more. 'I hear,' said His Majesty to me, 'that Quixada has given you a commission —' those were his very words. 'Remember that I shall consider the fulfilment of his wishes as good

service, done to myself.' That commission, as you well know, Ana, was the care of our little Jerome——"

"Yes——"

"His education was to be intrusted to our parish priest——"

"Who is not fulfilling the trust," grumbled Ana.

"Well, the curate is doing what he can for him. And besides my pension, given me by His Imperial Majesty—do we not get every year through Adrian fifty ducats for the boy's keep? And did we not swear and promise, each of us, that we would not tell or declare to any living person whose the child is, but that I should say he is mine?"

"Do you think for a minute, Francisco, that Don Luis de Quixada, Vice-Chamberlain of the Imperial household, is paying us fifty ducats a year to keep a child of Señor Adrian de Bues?"

"Woman, cease!"

"Willingly, Francisco. But fifty ducats do not roll down poor folks' chimneys on rainy nights and I can't help wondering, if he is not Señor Adrian's son —*whose* son *is* he?"

CHAPTER III

TRUANT

None of these searching questions bothered little Jerome. Ana, despite her complaints, was fonder of him than she would admit, and despite the fact that he had long tugged at her apron strings with all sorts of requests and all sorts of questions, he really made up part of her day's life, without her realizing how much of it he filled. Never conscious of rebuff when he had a plea to urge, Jerome really ruled the foster parents with whose lot his had been cast.

The morning after the boy's humiliating encounter in the highway, he woke early, only to run to the burnished blade of Francisco's broadsword that served him as a mirror, to look for the welt on his cheek. It was completely gone—not a trace remained—and he put on his peasant-boy rig, happy again.

In childhood, adventures never come singly. Francisco had a cross-bow of horn that hung on the wall in Jerome's bedroom; and the lad had long cast envious eyes upon it. In response to his appeals to his father to be allowed to use it, the patient viol player explained that it was too big and heavy for his son to attempt. In lieu of this, being of a mechanical turn, he had made for Jerome a smaller cross-bow, and filled a quiver of arrows for him. Jerome, trudging daily across the fields to school with his peasant-boy companions, and usually with his dog, used the bow for shooting at the crows that haunted the cornfields

about the village, and sparrows that ate the cherries, and gophers that stole the barley seed.

On this morning after the blow from the weapon of the cavalier, Jerome formed a momentous resolution: he would hereafter place himself in defense at all points against molestation. With this resolve formed, he breakfasted and dragged Francisco's big bow down from its brackets. Then choosing a propitious moment, he ran out of the house by the front door when neither Francisco nor Ana was looking. Armed with this formidable weapon which he could not even bend to the notch, he started for school, filled with a sense of great responsibility, and an ardent spirit of adventure. But before reaching school, he craftily hid the big bow in a clump of hazel bushes, hard by, and appeared before the master with an innocent and virtuous air.

With the lessons over for the morning, one of his companions descried a great cloud of dust in the distant highway. Forgetting all about his bow, Jerome joined his playfellows and they set off on the run to investigate. Very soon a column of men approached the village, and Jerome saw, for the first time in his life, the order, precision and military trappings of the foot-soldiers of the great Emperor, Charles V.

All the boys were excited, but Jerome went wild. The shrill music of the fife and drum intoxicated him. He became as one dazed, staring wildly at the sight before him, and beating his ear crazily with his hand to keep time to the drum beats.

Even his school fellows noticed his excitement, and laughed and booed at him. But he was insensible to everything except the marching soldiers; and as the last of the company passed, he began to follow them. His companions shouted a protest; he neither saw nor

heard anything but the trappings, the marching and the drums. And trying his best to keep the long step of the brisk-moving soldiers, he disappeared after the column, down the road.

Now there is nothing that three schoolboys like better to do than to tell the teacher on another boy, especially if it promise to bring the culprit a thrashing. For some reason, to them mysterious, Jerome had never been whipped in school. This truancy, however, seemed so flagrant a misdeed that he would surely be brought to book. Unable to stop him from following the soldiers, and lacking the hardihood to join him, his companions dashed back to school with the hue and cry that Jerome had run off with the soldiers. Jerome's teacher was a short and fat man who rode to and from the village on a donkey. But he was a conscientious man, and hastening to his donkey, unloosed and mounted him and gave chase.

Still there were difficulties. The column had a good start and the teacher had matched against him the wits of a boy resourceful long before he was twelve. Jerome had pondered the parting threats of his playfellows, about telling the teacher; and he knew the teacher. As he hurried on behind his heroes, choked with dust, he cast more than one watchful look behind. When at length he saw in the near distance a man on a donkey, he dodged into the nearest field of grain and while keeping up his pace, was hidden from the road. His teacher, presenting now a droll figure on the donkey as he belabored him vigorously and caught up with the troopers, asked the men of the rear file about the truant.

But troopers are proverbial rascals and these gave the anxious master no satisfaction. Had a boy followed them? They were not sure—one said no, an-

other, yes. In any case, whether one had or not, he had long since disappeared. The baffled teacher turned back, consoling himself with the thought of what a whipping the culprit should have at his hands had he not been sternly forbidden ever to strike him. And Jerome, sneaking cautiously back to the column out of the corn, while the troopers laughed, saw the disappointed teacher turn about, and gave himself once more to the overwhelming fascination of the drums and the tramp, tramp, tramp of the bronzed, heavily armed, foot-soldiers of the Emperor.

The tale-bearing boys, crestfallen at his escape and renewing their hopes of seeing Jerome brought to book, ran to town to tell his parents and hung around the house till they were in danger of a whipping themselves for not getting home for their suppers; but Jerome again failed them.

It was long after the last of his fellows had abandoned the death-watch, so to call it, long after the sunset of the June day—and June days are very long in Spain—that poor Jerome, dust-covered, bedraggled, thirsty, hungry and dead with fatigue, stumbled furtively into the open kitchen door, hoping to sneak unseen upstairs supperless to bed.

It was an irony of fate that but for his betrayal by his best friend, he would have succeeded. Beggar on the hearth roused himself at the sound of the beloved footsteps to greet his little master, and his dancing and yelping reached the watchful ear of Ana sitting in front of the house with Francisco, in the quiet of the moonlight. Frightened as she had been and angry as she was, her heart melted at the sight of the hapless truant. His gaunt and famished face with its dried furrows of perspiration, his dust-grimed cheeks,

his big sunken eyes looking from cavernous depths appealingly out at her as she confronted him with an accusing candle—his appearance was so woebegone, his plight so completely miserable that Ana wanted to laugh but dared not. She maintained her stern mien.

Not so, Francisco. He soon joined his wife in the kitchen and being much frightened by the suspense was still very angry—so angry that he bared his arm, snatched a riding whip from the wall and without a word made ready to give Jerome a whipping. It was the first time their charge had ever given them such a scare; Francisco resolved it should be the last.

Ana, much alarmed, ran to her husband to restrain him. "No, Francisco! Jerome," she exclaimed sternly, "run upstairs this minute!"

Jerome, it may be believed, lost no time in scudding away.

"Francisco," whispered his wife, candle in hand, "do you know what you are doing?"

Francisco stared at her, wrathful. "Do you know," she whispered excitedly, "what it means if we lose that boy? Do you not lose fifty ducats a year? And do you realize that you were forbidden, as I was, *ever* to strike that boy—have you forgotten our solemn promise that we never would strike, and the penalty we should pay if we ever broke it? Not only your fifty ducats would be lost but your pension! And your reputation with Señor Adrian, Don Luis, perhaps"—she lowered her voice still further—"even with His Majesty, would be lost forever!"

CHAPTER IV

THE MARQUESS APPEARS

At nightfall, after a period of anxiety and suspense, everything looks worse than it does next morning after all hands have slept. The truant escaped the threatening rod. More than that, Jerome, who was too footsore and weary to go to school, stayed home and within an hour after breakfast had completely broken down Francisco's resentment and had him laughing at his antics as he marched and countermarched before him in the garden—showing him "how the soldiers did it."

"Whosever son he is, that boy is a limb of Satan," declared Francisco, talking with Ana a little later. Francisco spoke very deliberately; he was deep-voiced and slow. "I get mad enough sometimes to kill that boy"—Francisco had a trick of repeating his phrases. "Before I know it," he continued, "he works me around and has me making something for him. What do you suppose he wants now? Guns, guns. Last month it was ships, ships. He has the pond full of ships now and the ducks scared to death driving them around—he calls the ducks Turks, and says they should all be killed. So they should, I agree, but one at a time, so we can eat them."

"I want him to pick beans," said Ana. "Where is he now?"

"Yesterday he took my crossbow to school——"

"Your crossbow to school!" echoed Ana. "Not the *big* one!"

"The *big* one," repeated Francisco imperturbably.

"How in the world could he carry it?"

"He *did* carry it, and hid it in the hazel bushes and left it there when he took after the soldiers. So I have sent him to get it, before somebody steals it."

"Took your crossbow! Francisco!" Ana looked admiringly at her husband. "You certainly are patient with that boy!"

Francisco resented the implication. "What about you?" he grumbled.

But Francisco made the guns, most of them mere sticks, and they were carefully put away by Jerome every night after the drill of those schoolfellows he could enlist by persuasion, promises or threats in his brigade. Day after day the irrepressible lad marched and wheeled his company around the duck pond. In rain or shine, if he could find even one raw recruit who could be bribed with a bit of a comb of honey to follow him and Beggar, Jerome drilled his soldier or soldiers, frightened the ducks and geese and shoved his ships madly around the pond to the confusion of the infidel and the Turk—represented by two stones set in effigy on a piece of driftwood dragged to the pond after being salvaged from the river.

One day, following a series of mimic fights, there was a real fight—not with the infidel and the Turk but with an unruly private in the ranks. This was Francisco's nephew, a burly fellow, usually docile but possessed of some ambition and cunning—his nickname was Pedro the Fox.

Pedro had more than once shown signs of insubordination, but was kept quiet by being allowed to carry the best broomstick, next to Jerome's, in the brigade.

He was at least one-half bigger in size than his commander Jerome. He was older, and though a dunce in school, he was the biggest boy in the squad, and aspired more and more to its leadership.

On an occasion memorable in the story of the amateur soldiery in Francisco's garden, Pedro, after being corrected again and again for a breach of discipline, threw down his broomstick and declared he would no longer obey orders. Not alone that, but picking up the broomstick again in defense, he urged the four remaining privates to follow him over to his yard where, he promised, they should learn to drill under a competent instructor—himself. Jerome ordered him to lay down his gun as being government property. Pedro, who was not above reckless assumption, declared the gun was his own, that Jerome had given it to him. On this issue the captain and his big private joined. And in the fight that ensued, Jerome, after being knocked down at least twice, assaulted Pedro with such a burst of fury that the big boy, frightened, retreated precipitately, a defeated foe.

Of course the quarrel did not last long. Jerome had suffered nothing more than a black eye, and held his recruits. The spectacle of these, marching behind Jerome, up and down the street and in Francisco's garden, was too much for the sulky Pedro. He watched several days from an envious afar, and at school he then made overtures. He would return if he might be promoted from the ranks to a captaincy under the generalissimo.

This concession the youthful commander expressed himself as willing to make, and allowed Pedro to rejoin the brigade, promising that his rather superior broomstick, which had figured in the climax of the row, should be restored to him.

By a happy thought, Jerome now divided his brigade into two armed forces, the Spaniards and the Moors. And by making Pedro General of the Moors while he remained Generalissimo of the Spaniards, he was able to conduct warm campaigns and inflict such condign punishment on Pedro as the occasion called for—since the Moors were always defeated. Jerome, marshalling his men with the Spanish war-cry, "Santiago," and arming them with clods of earth from the field, drove the enemy all about the neighborhood.

One afternoon, Jerome with his crossbow was hurrying home from school with Beggar and his schoolfellows trailing him across the fields, when a great coach, with glass windows in it, and escorted by four outriders, rumbled along the highway from Madrid. Coaches were at that time almost unknown in Spain. Whenever one rolled through a Spanish village, the entire populace turned out to gaze in wonderment.

This particular vehicle would cause as much curiosity to-day as it did then. Drawn by four mules, harnessed in pairs, with long traces, it resembled a small wooden house with two tiny windows, perched on four giant wheels. One outrider sat astride the off lead mule; another sat on the roof of the coach, guiding the mules with a long pole.

As the coach whirled past, a grand gentleman, riding alone within it, very fat, and wearing a large white mustache and a Flemish beard, saw for an instant, and was struck by, the spectacle of this blue-eyed, red-headed roadside lad, and his plainly defiant attitude.

The coach with its attendants passed rapidly on, and reaching Leganes, halted. The footman made inquiries and the grand equipage with its impressive escort

finally stopped before Francisco's door. The great gentleman alighted. While the villagers stared and crowded around as closely as they dared, Ana appeared at the door and the gentleman, informing her that he was a groom of the Emperor's Chamber, presented a letter from Don Luis.

Ana, whose eyesight, she always said, was not good, when asked to read anything, turned in great trepidation to summon Francisco to read the letter. Francisco, better used to court manners and ceremony, invited the gentleman within; and standing before his wife and the stranger, read aloud the communication from Don Luis.

The good viol-player stammered as he progressed with the reading—stammered, and coughed as if he had a catch in his throat. The letter from Don Luis directed Francisco and Ana to turn Jerome over to the bearer.

The little household was thrown into consternation. And in this interval, Jerome, coming down the street, had seen the villagers surrounding the coach which had stopped at his own door. Being suspicious, he beat a retreat through a neighboring field toward the river. This might be, he thought, an officer to take him in charge for his unforgotten highway altercation.

Ana, her head in a whirl, sent her heavy-footed nephew Pedro and companions to find and fetch the missing Jerome. They found him at the river—now less than a rivulet—where he had soused Beggar in a little pool in the gravel and sat with the dog between his knees pulling burrs out of the tail of his shaggy and shabby but patient pet.

When he started up for the house in response to the imperative summons, his companions followed,

still hoping to see him switched. Indeed, Ana stood at the kitchen door switch in hand—the switch that had never yet been laid across Jerome's shoulders but was held always in reserve as a symbol of authority. At this moment, so great was Ana's excitement that it seemed for an instant as if the whip were really coming into play.

But the grand gentleman, to her further surprise, had followed her to the kitchen door and intervening in some alarm, restrained Ana's threatening arm and looked keenly at the boy with the wide-open eyes who now halted in astonishment before them.

The afternoon sun fell across his face as he stood with his crossbow in hand and his wet dog at his heels; it lighted his deep-set eyes under their heavy brows and illumined the strongly-marked features streaked with the soil of the day's rough play. His peasant weeds hung about him in loose disorder; in contrast to the head rising well above the long, slender neck and the boyish dignity in the carriage of the wearer, they seemed incongruous.

A seasoned courtier, as well as a man of intuition and intelligence, the grand gentleman absorbed every one of these details in a moment's scrutiny. As groom of the Emperor's Chamber, the Marquess Prevost, standing keen-eyed at Ana's side, needed no assurance to convince him after the briefest inspection that this was the lad for whom he had been sent. As to just who the boy was, the Marquess had no more information than the villagers. Men, women and children, whispering surmises, nudged and crowded one another, as they hovered, open-mouthed and staring, about Francisco's gate; the more intimate and bolder of the village dames even invaded the living-room of the house.

It was they who first saw, through the open door

to the kitchen, the grand gentleman greet little Jerome with a marked, and, to them, astonishing deference. And when the Marquess rescued him from Ana's washcloth, while she hurriedly and chokingly cleansed his face and hands—with Jerome still clinging to his bow—the Marquess secretly remembered that this was the belligerent roadside lad who, in obvious defiance of something or somebody, had attracted his attention when the dust of his coach had for a moment enveloped him.

Ana, while her neighboring dames sat in solemn silence, flew about to prepare a meal for the great Marquess who had explained that as soon as he and Jerome had taken refreshment, they must be on their way. "But give yourself no trouble about a dinner," smiled the dignified courtier; "I am just come from the Court at Brussels and travelling so great a distance, I have my cook with me. If you will only permit him the run of the kitchen, he will prepare my meal, and the footman will serve me. Tell me, Jerome," he continued, turning to his new charge, "are there many crows about Leganes? I see," he explained, "that you carry your bow. Is there anything to shoot at?"

He found Jerome, once his boyish reserve had been overcome, quite ready to tell him everything he knew about the birds, gophers, snakes and small game of the neighborhood, his manner gathering enthusiasm as his reticence was dissipated and he progressed with his narration.

While dinner was preparing, the Marquess sat with leisurely mien, an interested questioner and listener. From the coach, the equipage of plate was carried through the crowd into the living-room and the glit-

tering silver set out for the grand gentleman's repast. Ana had laid a cover for Jerome with those for herself and Francisco in the kitchen. What was the amazement of all when the Marquess, smiling again, intervened and bade Jerome dine with him on the silver dishes! Not alone that, but he seated him at his right hand and made sure by his attention to the wants of his guest, that the liveried servant standing behind the boy's chair should serve him well.

The semi-ceremonious meal despatched, Jerome was to be made ready for the forthcoming trip, which was described to him as a visit to an aunt—courtiers are usually good diplomats. Suspicious though the lad naturally was, the engaging gentleman had pretty well won him over to his idea of a pleasant journey and Jerome, not really understanding Ana's emotion and Francisco's stolid expression and marked silence, speedily made himself ready for the trip. His belongings being of the fewest and simplest, he soon appeared with a small bundle under one arm containing merely a fresh shirt and some stockings; on the other arm he carried his crossbow; behind him trailed Beggar, frightened but obedient to his master's encouraging calls.

The Marquess was already seated among the cushions within the coach. He leaned forward. "You won't need your bow, Jerome; plenty of bows for you to play with where you are going, my boy."

Jerome looked at him earnestly. He was thoughtful for a moment. Then turning to his erstwhile enemy Pedro, rival on many a field of battle, and handing him the treasured weapon with which he had acquired such skill as a marksman, he said: "Keep it." He turned then to pick up Beggar at his feet. "Oh, no!"

said the great man in the most conciliating manner. "Not the dog, Jerome. You will find many a nice dog —as many as you like, at your aunt's."

"But I don't want any other dogs," protested Jerome; "I just want Beggar."

"I am sorry, but we can't carry the dog in the coach, Jerome. You will have to leave him here."

Jerome stood with the blinking Beggar in his arms —not defiant but earnest. "But I must take Beggar if I go," he declared solemnly.

"If you go!" echoed the grand gentleman, still smiling but speaking with a touch of asperity. "You must go, Jerome!"

"Not without my dog."

"What!" echoed the Marquess. "You refuse to obey? Think better of it, my boy. Then I tell you, again, you *must* go."

He spoke with a sternness that betokened authority.

"Never will I go anywhere, without Beggar," returned Jerome in almost defiant rebellion, as he clung to his shabby pet.

Francisco smiled grimly, to himself. He had had a little experience in bumping up against that immature, but well-defined will: he awaited the issue now with academic interest. The Marquess, haughtily dignified at being defied, unbent enough at length to protest— indeed, he continued energetically to protest that the dog *must* be left behind. Jerome stood silent, respectful but immovable. When Marquess Prevost perceived that nothing short of physical force would break the boy's determination—and to this he was plainly disinclined to resort—he blandly suggested that after all the dog might be taken in charge by the footman who rode with the coachman and put for safety in the boot. Thus the first real battle in Jerome's life

was waged and won and Beggar went with his stubborn master.

The Marquess nodded, the coachman spoke to the mules, and the coach, surrounded by the villagers, began to move away. But while the controversy over the dog had been going on, Ana's gossips had broadly hinted to her that perhaps the grand gentleman might never bring Jerome back! Thus, as the coach wheels continued to revolve, she headed a group of running villagers and brought up the rear of the little procession crying bitterly and calling on the stranger not to bereave her of her darling boy. And to add to the confusion, a crowd of village urchins surrounded and pursued the coach, shouting farewells to their playfellow.

But the coachman whipped up vigorously, the mules trotted faster, the dust rose in heavier clouds and the bedraggled pursuers gradually gave up the chase.

In such a crowd there is always one who clings to the pursuit longer than anyone else. In this case, it was Pedro, whose long legs and big feet flew along in the air as he ran beside the coach until well past the schoolhouse. Long after everyone else had turned back, Pedro ran. But as the stoutest heart must at last give over, he, too, slackened and stopping in the middle of the road, bawled loudly after the coach and shed a flood of ineffectual tears.

CHAPTER V

A CHANGE OF ESTATE

TRAVELLING fast, the coach bearing Jerome reached Valladolid. Here, the Marquess Prevost breakfasted at the inn with his charge, dog and all—for the good-natured grand gentleman seemed grown fairly well reconciled to Jerome's appealing Beggar. Jerome did not quite understand just why one liveried man should stand behind his chair and another behind the chair of the Marquess while they breakfasted; but he kept his wonderment to himself.

Having finished the early repast, the Marquess sent out for apparel more suitable for a young gentleman than Jerome's peasant weeds, and various tradespeople, obsequious in manner and active in effort to please, soon appeared in the Marquess' apartments with boxes, baskets and parcels of clothing—to the great excitement of Jerome, who manifested much interest in selecting, under his patron's supervision, livelier colors and finer stuffs for his personal wear than he had hitherto seen in his life.

With this pleasant task finished to the satisfaction of all, the coach was headed across a wide open heath where dense clumps of low evergreen shrubs covered with little purple flowers interested Jerome—for he knew plenty of rabbits must be there. From the heath, the highway led by an easy descent into a valley surrounded by low hills, the vale of the Sequillo. And thus the lovely Infanta of Spain, Juana, missed a

call from a youngster of whose existence even she was unaware. Indeed, Jerome's patron seemed wholly intent on keeping his mission secret and in leaving on the mind of his youthful charge only pleasant impressions of himself.

The party reached the village of Villagarcia hard by the river and travelled more slowly. Passing the village itself, the Marquess gave some specific directions and turning from the highway presently, the mules entered the country estate and the home of Don Luis Quixada.

Doña Magdalena de Ulloa, his wife, greeted the Marquess. "I bring a letter from your husband, Doña Magdalena," he said, kissing her hand deferentially. "It will explain itself."

The unexpected visitors were made very welcome. In the veins of Doña Magdalena flowed the blood of the royal house of Castile and the house of Luna. Young and beautiful, her virtue shone as a star about her. Tears gently suffused her eyes as she opened the letter of her absent husband. "My dear lord, Don Luis," she said in low tones to the Marquess, "is of necessity away from me so much, owing to his duties to His Majesty the Emperor, that I am overcome even at the sight of his handwriting."

"Let us hope, Doña Magdalena," responded the Marquess sympathetically, "that the Court will be soon removed to Spain. Despite the polish of Brussels, I have no love for the Netherlands."

Doña Magdalena was reading. The message from her husband was brief. To his protestations of affection, he added only the words that the boy the bearer was about to place under her care was "the son of a great man, and my dear friend. And I entreat of you, my dear wife," wrote Don Luis, "to watch over the

child as tenderly as if he were our own. Up to this time he has been known as Jerome; henceforth, the boy is to bear simply the name of John. It is the wish of his father that he may go into the Church. Try to develop in him a vocation."

CHAPTER VI

THE NEW HOME

THE castle of Don Luis Quixada—trusted retainer of Charles V—situated on the southern slope of a range of hills lying to the north of Villagarcia, commanded a view of the lovely vale of the Sequillo and the mountains lying across the river to the southeast of the village itself.

As the carriage approacned the castle, Prevost had called John's attention to its massive towers and strong walls embattled with artillery. He pointed out the emblazoned ensign, which fluttered on the saluting stand, and explained that in accordance with an ancient seignorial custom, the flying of the flag announced to visitors that the master or mistress of the castle was at home. The ensign, thus displayed, further extended to all who should in these circumstances demand it, the offer of free and secure hospitality.

In the reception room of this imposing yet hospitable-looking mansion, Doña Magdalena was sitting in conference with the Marquess Prevost and a Dominican friar, when, under the Marquess' orders, the boy Jerome, escorted from the coach by a footman, appeared in the open doorway.

Jerome saw before him a lady of slender but majestic figure clad in velvet. He dropped on his knees as Prevost had told him to do, and raised towards her his little hands, joined, as Ana had taught

him to do before the altar of the Virgen de Los Angeles.

The boy made rather a curious appearance in his unaccustomed apparel, for he was hardly as yet habituated to his finery.

But in addition to his somewhat burdensome elegance of attire, Jerome carried under his right arm his frowsy but precious Beggar.

Doña Magdalena, married only a few years, childless, and of a high womanly and affectionate nature, gazed at the little fellow—come to her wholly as a surprise and under so strange circumstances—with a mingled feeling of uncertainty and a feeling of attraction growing every moment into one of deep interest for the mystery child, of whose very existence she had until that moment been in ignorance.

Could he—the thought flashed across her mind—be the offspring of her own dear husband, Don Luis? He had never given her occasion to doubt the singleness of his affection; she was well assured of the loyalty of his devotion. Yet why so strange and mysterious a charge upon her as this? Much of his time was of necessity spent far away from her and his native land. The gay and luxurious court of Brussels, to which his duties called him as Vice-Chamberlain of the Imperial Household, was noted for its laxities. Could this child of mystery—this cruel thought pierced Doña Magdalena's heart—be her husband's son, though she herself was his first wife?

But the quite natural anxiety in the heart of a sensitive woman and a devoted wife was destined not to be solved until further years had passed over the heads of both foster-mother and foster-child. As Doña Magdalena regarded the little stranger now, her heart went out to him every moment with a stronger yearn-

ing. She rose from her chair, the Marquess rose, she held out her hands, walked swiftly toward the appealing boy and with her eyes already suffused, kissed him on the forehead and folded him, dog and all, in her arms.

Jerome felt himself caught up in an affectionate embrace in those arms in the velvet sleeves. A beautiful face bent down and its lips touched his. The lady was in tears as he heard her say, in broken accents to the Dominican friar: "God help me, Brother! What a pity I am not the mother of this angel!"

CHAPTER VII

PROGRESS

"And I am to be your foster-mother, now—just the same as if I were your truly mother—my dear child." Doña Magdalena half whispered the words in the boy's ear as she held him fast in her arms and kissed him once more after they were alone. "And I hope you will like your new home," she added warmly, "and that you will love me as much as I know I shall love you."

"Shall I have to go to school?" asked Jerome apprehensively, his wide-open eyes studying curiously everything about him—the long, long windows hung with filmy curtains and heavy draperies, the high, high ceiling of this immensely large room, upstairs, which was to be all his; the room alone seemed larger than Francisco's whole house. "Shall I have to go to school?" he repeated, staring about him.

"Far from it. Instead of going to school you shall have a kind man come and tell you stories and show you how to read and write in the way I write. And sometimes, nice boys will come here to visit you. And I am going to have a pony for you——"

"A pony?" The boy's eyes shone like moons.

"A pony," repeated Doña Magdalena. "And you may go hunting almost every day; besides, the river runs through your own grounds and you may build dams——"

"How do you build a dam?"

"Gaspar, the forester, will show you. And you are to call me 'aunt' because you know in Castile 'aunt' is a word of endearment; it means we love those we call so. And I hope you are going to love *me*."

Jerome looked up into her face soberly. "I think I am," he said very respectfully and with a very serious expression. "May I go and build a dam now?"

"I'm afraid there's no water to speak of in the river to-day—it's summer, you know. But Gaspar will know all about when to build one. And with all this and your new home, dear, you are to have a new and beautiful name—no longer Jerome—which," suggested Doña Magdalena, diplomatically, "is a nice name for a *little* boy; but for a big boy—! And you are growing so big now—why see!" she rose and brought her charge to his feet. "You almost come up to my arm now—you must have a *big* boy's name—John!"

There were so many novelties in the new life for Jerome, now become John, that the change to what was probably only another of his original baptismal names was not overwhelming. To have a gentlemanly-looking person in the dining room behind his chair all the while he sat at table and a second personage similarly arrayed standing stiffly behind Doña Magdalena's chair, throughout the meal, was so much of a surprise that the little fellow, busy looking at the man behind his aunt's chair, quite lost his appetite and had to be reminded he must eat.

And his camouflaged schooling began almost at once. John frankly disliked books and study and neither the sacristan at Leganes nor the master of the small school had contributed much to his education. But he found he must learn to read and write Spanish and to read Latin. In music he fortunately had already

a very good start from Francisco. Besides, he liked music as much as he hated Latin.

But much more than book-learning was included in the boy's education. It was out-of-doors that he shone as a pupil. The gray-haired forester, Gaspar, pronounced little John a wonder at riding—although to John's mortification he was compelled to begin on a she-mule—and extraordinary with the crossbow. A bigger bow was provided and little John with beating heart often lay in covert with old Gaspar and Beggar waiting for the game to rise. Nor could he ever be made to admit that he was tired, or cold, or hungry, or wet—and there was enough of all of these discomforts in their excursions—though Gaspar knew well enough how to limit them all and avoid serious reproof from the very watchful Doña Magdalena. She loved best to sit with her needle and her maids in the shade of the great oaks and watch John compete with Gaspar on the greensward, at archery.

A one-eyed veteran of Don Luis, named Diego, now a trusted retainer, who had followed the campaigns in Flanders, took charge of John's fencing; and protested soon to his mistress that if he himself did not brush up on his defense, he was like to lose his other eye to his too-apt pupil's passado.

Thus, competent instructors were provided for John, both within doors and without, for advancement in those branches deemed essential in the days of the sixteenth century for the rounding-out of a gentleman of Spain. One branch of such an education alone, Doña Magdalena reserved for herself, because she deemed it the most vital—his spiritual culture.

Doña Magdalena taught him his duties to God, to his Faith and to his fellow-men, and inspired his youthful mind with her own particular devotion to the

Mother of God. Moreover, by making him frequently the channel of her bounty, she inculcated in him the virtue of benevolence and early made him familiar with the practice of almsgiving.

On those certain days that the poor of the neighborhood assembled at the castle gate to receive alms, John was sent into the courtyard or into the gallery above, to watch their coming, and to report on their numbers. When the gathering was complete, he ran to announce it to his aunt and to receive from her the dole apportioned to the number of the assemblage. This dole John would then dispense in the fashion of the old Spanish and Christian courtesy prescribed by the foster-mother, beginning with the eldest of the beggars and giving to each a real; at the same time saluting each by name, and kissing the coin ere he dropped it into the outstretched hand.

Every day seemed to deepen Doña Magdalena's affection for her tender charge. One thought only would recur to trouble her happiness, despite all she could do—the suspicion that he might owe his being to some earlier possessor of her husband's heart. This suspicion she confided at times to her confessor, who wisely advised her to wait with patience until time should reveal the truth.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIRE

The grain had ripened in the rich fields along the dry and dusty channel of the Sequillo, the grapes had purpled and the vines had browned before the impatient Don Luis found an escape from his court duties for a visit to his beloved Magdalena and the new mystery-member of his household who had already become, through his activities, so conscious a part of it.

In September the Emperor was to move from Brussels to Spain. He had already through his abdication cast aside all honors of this world and now sought only the retirement of a religious house to prepare for the next world. Don Luis had been sent forward to Valladolid to prepare for his coming; and having made there all the arrangements for his reception, hastened on to Villagarcia and his waiting wife.

One early fall morning she stood in the courtyard watching John who, on his little white mule and with the vigilant one-eyed Diego likewise soberly mounted, was just about to start off for a ride.

Suddenly a clatter of hoofs in the driveway announced a horseman. Dashing into the courtyard, a dust-covered courier dismounting from a foam-flecked horse, uncovered, advanced with formal dignity and handed a letter to Doña Magdalena. It told her that her liege lord would be with her that night for dinner.

Radiant with anticipation, the lady gave her

orders right and left and being an excellent mistress of her household, the late-summer descending sun found everything in readiness for her lord's reception. Peasants, retainers, and servants were assembled and when Don Luis, accompanied by his two secretaries and a half-dozen men-at-arms, rode up the long driveway, he was met by a welcome that testified to his lovely wife's popularity with the whole countryside.

His coming was an event fraught with unusual excitement for John. As the lord of the estate rode up with his clattering escort—no music in the world was sweeter to John's ears than the sharp ring of horses' hoofs on the courtyard cobblestones—the boy inspected him with wonderment.

Don Luis, dismounting hurriedly, opened his arms to the cherished sweetheart of his maturer years—he was much the older of the two. As he embraced Magdalena, John looked at him with beating heart. Tall and well-poised in his height, his deep, very large dark eyes and his long, slender almost Roman nose dominated a face that inspired awe yet confidence.

When he turned to John, it was the little fellow who, glad to follow his foster-mother's instructions, held out his arms to Don Luis to ask an embrace; it was warmly given. The formal black beard and the well-trimmed mustachios, in the style depicted by Titian, held no terrors for little John—the man and the boy were soon at home with each other. John was allowed to sit with Don Luis and his foster-mother at table and only his new training held back, in part at least, all the stories he wanted to tell Don Luis about Gaspar and Diego and the many strange things he and they had discovered at various times in their wanderings over the great estate.

But one untoward incident marred the peace of

the home-coming. In the kitchen, the celebration of the day was carried by the excited servitors and their trooper guests well on into the night. One enthusiastic retainer of Don Luis, having imbibed too freely of the wine for which the Valley of the Sequillo was deservedly famed, overset a candle in the bedroom wherein, with three companions, he was lodged. He was the last man to bed and without bothering to avert the mischief, rolled into bed himself. But a curtain had been ignited and soon the room was filled with smoke and flame. The startled soldiers, driven from their burning quarters, made their escape, crying fire; and in the merest moment the household was in a panic.

Don Luis' practised ear was the first to take the alarm. Hastily waking his wife, and flinging a cloak over his shoulders, he dashed down the gallery to the room of John, took him from his sound sleep, and without a word of explanation, carried him, bedclothes and all, down stairs and out-of-doors to safety; he then rushed back to rescue Doña Magdalena.

Having in the same wise taken his wife to a place of safety, he hurriedly donned more clothing and hastening to the servants' quarters, took charge of fighting the flames. Happily, the partial separation of the quarters from the main part of the castle, and the presence of an unusual number of men on the scene, enabled him to extinguish the threatening conflagration before more serious damage was done. And toward daybreak, the household was once more peacefully disposed in slumber.

Curiously enough, the manner in which her loved husband had met the sudden emergency relieved Doña Magdalena's mind of its chief anxiety. Herself secure in her husband's devotion, she felt that John's safety

had been assured before her own, only because Don Luis' honor must have been engaged in guarding thus a sacred trust confided to him by another. That the faithful servant of the Emperor had carried John first from the danger, aroused no feeling of resentment on her part. She was a woman grown, and could in great measure care for herself when once advised how to do so. The child, on the other hand, would have been incapable of saving himself; and she reasoned that honor had bound Don Luis to care for John, even before attending to the preservation of his wife. Thus assured, she forebore to tax her lord with questions that might be awkward for him to answer. Jealousy ceased to mingle in her feeling of love toward the boy.

Doña Magdalena made it a practice to study her protégé in his developing tendencies, in order to observe whatever characteristics John might reveal through first impressions. She took care to show him the riches of the castle, its tapestries, sumptuous furnishings, the chased silver which shone everywhere, the splendid vestments and richly embroidered linens in the oratory—these were displayed before him with a deliberate intent. But luxuries failed to excite an especial interest in John. He regarded them as one reared amidst these things; and with such natural aplomb that his aunt was amazed by his nonchalance. Even the wrought-iron stove, a thing then unknown in Spain, brought from Flanders to heat his aunt's room, and so rare and precious that it was taken to Yuste later on to heat the Emperor's apartment, excited no more than ordinary curiosity on John's part.

It was only when she took him to the armory and he saw the heavy armor, lances that measured four times his stature, and the cuirasses, swords, arquebuses and pistols, that he became wildly enthusiastic. Beside him-

self with delight, he examined every detail of the apparatus of war, putting out his hands to touch these marvels, and restraining himself as if fearful of profaning them.

After enthusiasm overcame all else, he stopped before a tiny suit of armor, a marvellously-wrought thing, brought from Italy by Don Luis, and begged permission to touch it. He felt it all over from top to bottom, studied its joints and sockets, one by one, raised and lowered the visor of the helmet again and again, and tapped the breast-plate with his fist. The hollow sound it gave forth was music to his ears, and he raised his pretty head toward his aunt, radiant and illumined, with a smile that revealed his genius.

Confiding all of this to Don Luis, his wife said to him: "My dear lord, we shall have a soldier, not a friar, in little John."

To confirm Doña Magdalena's impression, Don Luis, taking John one morning again to the armory, allowed him to examine an arquebus and take it in his hands. He asked the boy whether he should like to fire it. John was enraptured. Diego carried the gun outside, charged it very lightly, rested the barrel on the battlement, and bade John hold the stock tightly against his shoulder, shut his eyes and fire. Little John obeyed in all details except the final one. He fired the gun, but with his eyes wide open, and asked where the bullet was.

Don Luis smiled as Diego made enthusiastic signs behind John's back. "You are right," he said, later to his wife, "the boy is a soldier."

CHAPTER IX

AN AMAZING FUNCTION

On the evening of the 1st day of October, a courier reached the home of Don Luis, bringing the news that the Emperor had landed at Laredo, in Biscay, with instructions for Don Luis to join him there.

The household was soon on edge with the anticipated departure of the lord and master. One farewell dinner, one more evening with little John, a few parting hours with Magdalena, and mounting his horse at two o'clock on the morning of the second, Don Luis, accompanied by his men-at-arms, rode into the North. He reached Laredo on the night of the fourth, took command of the imperial progress, and escorted His Majesty to a commodious convent at Yuste where special quarters had been built for him and his household—this was to be the home the former ruler of nearly half of Europe had chosen for his earthly abode.

In this strange retirement, the Emperor urged his faithful chamberlain to remain with him. Accordingly, Don Luis took up a permanent abode with his wife and John in Quacos, a village lying about a mile from the Convent, and at the foot of its chestnut-covered hill.

The Emperor, although feeling the burden of his strenuous years, gave Doña Magdalena an audience some days after her arrival, and received her with marked favor. Learning, too, of the presence of her ward, he asked that young John be brought along.

"And His Majesty was greatly pleased with the appearance of our John," said Magdalena to her husband, telling him of the interview, "for he placed his hand on his head, regarded him very closely, and told him he was to come often to see him. And he said he was much gratified to observe the attention and decorum with which John performed his devotions in the chapel," added Doña Magdalena, proudly. " 'He's been well taught,' said the Emperor, graciously."

Perhaps it was just as well, and perhaps it would have made no difference had His Majesty known, during that summer—his last on earth—that however edifying young John was in his devotions, he was now developing a spirit of adventure that had begun to worry his devoted foster-mother. More than once, tales came to her from neighboring peasants of a rascally boy's predatory visits to the village orchards; and the owners confessed they had been obliged to pelt him, when caught in their fruit trees.

In this, he had perhaps a quasi-confederate in the grim and one-eyed Diego, who winked at peccadillos such as these, and if he did not encourage them, did not seriously discourage them, despite Doña Magdalena's frequent admonitions that he *must* keep John out of mischief.

The little home which had thus been set up near his master by Don Luis had become dearer to John by reason of Diego's familiar knowledge of the country and sympathetic attitude toward his young charge. Diego could see more with one eye than the peasants of Quacos could with two. He knew where the game was, or could always find it, and where the fish were, and where the biggest figs and the reddest cherries and most luscious peaches grew, as well. These he pointed out to John to be admired rather than to be appropri-

ated, leaving the rest to the fast-growing lad's natural spirit of enterprise. He did regale his protégé at times with reminiscences of his own youthful escapades, explaining many a shrewd strategem by the aid of which he had as a boy escaped capture and punishment. But to suggest to John the filching of a fig or a pomegranate or a peach—perish the thought. Diego merely tagged along at a discreet distance, busying himself in poking about with Beggar for pestiferous gophers while keeping his weather-eye cocked for watchful peasants.

Likewise filled for John with interest, mingled with awe and novelty, were the glimpses he obtained of the now retired life of the distinguished commander, Charles V, who even in his conventual retreat could not wholly dispense with the dignity of the greatest of living European monarchs.

Thus ordered, with tutors for his instruction, in-a-book and out, with Diego for low-voiced and intriguing adventure, Doña Magdalena for solicitous counsel and Don Luis for frequent and wonderful visits to the imperial quarters in the convent, John's summer days passed. As a page of the Emperor's trusted chamberlain, the lad enjoyed the freedom of the imperial apartments to pass in and out of at will, whenever he was taken to the convent.

A sense of awe instinctively guarded his naturally free carriage and quick tongue when in the imperial presence. But the Emperor at times spoke to him and asked him surprising questions about ripe figs and juicy peaches; and volunteered anecdotes of his own boyhood days which, he more than once declared to John—as the boy long afterward remembered—were happier days than he had ever known since.

Summer was again drawing toward a close when

even John perceived that the monarch who had long held in his hand so many of the destinies of Europe, was failing. His greetings, not less kindly, were less lively than before.

And one evening, long remembered in John's life, he was dressed hurriedly in his black velvet, and silken hose, to answer a summons from the Emperor's apartments—and although he did not know it, a summons of attendance from the Emperor himself. It was already dark when he was taken by Don Luis to the convent palace and through many corridors and connecting rooms to the formal chamber of the Imperial Monarch.

In the sombre candlelight of the great room, little John perceived, as he entered with his foster-parent, a considerable assemblage of men in two groups. On one side were the courtiers and officials of the little court, maintained through necessity rather than choice, by the wearied ruler of Europe. Facing them, on the other side of the room, stood the strictly domestic—but still considerable—household of the Emperor, even to the servants and women of the menage.

To one of tender years nothing could be much more awesome than the presence of a company of men and women assembled at night in the half light of so spacious a room, and maintaining a rigid silence. No footfall made itself heard in the deep Flemish carpeting as John, following Don Luis, made his way across the impressive chamber and took a position between the two groups. It was then that John, already somewhat overcome by his surroundings, perceived the most striking of all the features of the scene. With his foster-parent, the boy was standing at some distance from, but facing, the foot of a chair, elevated on a dais and overhung with a heavy canopy. In this

chair John saw amid the cushions the pale features and the dark beard of His Majesty, Charles the Fifth.

Even in the dim light of the candles, the vision of the monarch's luminous, penetrating eyes seemed to reach everywhere and to be on everything around him. While John, his heart beating strangely in anticipation of some sequence of the strange moment, stood open-eyed and silent, the faint tinkle of a bell was heard, the double doors leading into the chamber from the royal cabinet opened, and a procession of religious and ecclesiastics entered. As they filed in, the hollow eyes of the enfeebled Emperor turned to mark their coming. Four pages in black, bearing lighted tapers, came first. Six acolytes, each carrying a large candle set in a massive candlestick, followed. Behind these walked a cross-bearer followed by four acolytes and two thurifers.

Then came the friars of the convent headed by their superior. In an impressive silence they crossed the room, bowing to the royal presence, and passed into the corridor leading to the convent church. As the last two of these brethren passed the Emperor, he rose to his feet, and preceded by the page at his side, bearing a taper, took up out of a tattered prayer book the chant the monks had began and followed them into the church. Immediately behind him walked Don Luis, and young John; and following these, the courtiers and the entire household of the Emperor, all arrayed in deep mourning.

Before the high altar stood an imposing catafalque covered by a pall of black velvet. At either side of the catafalque, the six acolytes placed the candles at the head, the foot, and midway between. The church shone with a blaze of waxen lights. The priests had taken their places at the altar, and in the choir, and

the great Charles, attired in sable weeds, and bearing a taper, stood while the chorus of men's voices intoned the funeral hymn, Dies Irae.

With the solemn service for the dead ended, the monarch gave his lighted taper into the hands of the priest at the altar, in token of his desire to yield his soul into the hands of his Maker. And high above, looking down on the kneeling throng, the colorful vestments, the masses of flowers, and the curling incense, the same dramatic vision shone forth in the splendid canvas, wherein Titian had pictured Charles as kneeling on the threshold of the mansions in heaven prepared for the blest.

A strange spectacle was thus presented to John's young eyes. He was seeing for the first and last time in his life a funeral service enacted for a man still living. At the Emperor's own instance, the full ritual of the requiem was being conducted before his own eyes. He sat gravely within the magnificence of his chancel throne and as he looked upon the solemn function before him, the soft refulgence of the many candles lighted the dark, hollow eyes and the stern, pale features of the captain who had so often on the fields of Europe led his undefeated veterans to victory. The thin, clear notes of the Dies Irae echoing through the chapel smote upon those ears which had so often listened to the shrill note of the trumpet and the welcome roar of musketry, as if to warn this dictator of terms to kings and princes that one day he should be summoned before the King of Kings to render account of his stewardship.

While John listened in awe to the friars as they intoned the solemn chant, and while he watched the aged prior and his train of servitors, as the peaceful clouds of incense rose about the catafalque, some fasci-

nation always drew his gaze back to the spare, black figure under the canopied throne in the chancel, whose mere name had so often carried consternation to the councils of those assembled against him.

On the way home, Don Luis was thoughtful. John's bated yet many questions were answered patiently but soberly. Neither the man nor the boy could quite shake off the depression of the scene they had witnessed.

That night, John, going early, as always, to bed, lay wakeful. And staring at him from the darkness of the ceiling he seemed to see the searching, sphinx-like eyes, the grave mouth and the sombre beard of the soldier who in relinquishing the lighted taper had symbolized his desire to return his life to his Maker. The fatherless, motherless boy was too young to grasp all of the implications of what he had seen. But it was far into the night before the innocence of boyhood sleep could curtain away the inscrutable face that troubled his dreams. He was soon to know why.

CHAPTER X

CAUGHT

But next day brought sunshine to the wild glens and flowery wastes of the Sequillo and sunshine to the heart of the boy. Diego was waiting for him when he came out from breakfast. The mules were saddled and the pawky Diego suggested a ride up the valley. He did not fully disclose his objective, but took care en route to dwell, in talking with his youthful companion, on the constant poaching and thieving that Don Luis was suffering at the hands of the village peasants. Diego had for some time proposed to himself retaliatory measures, incited thereto both by his martial spirit and by the prospect of luscious spoil in the undertaking.

The two took their way from Quacos through dusty and stubby vineyards and by delightful byways to the neighborhood of a secluded orchard which boasted the finest figs in the vale of the Sequillo. Diego's weakness for this Spanish fruit of the gods, doubtless urged him in his search for the best, and he had discovered this jewel hidden amid the windings of a Quacos ravine; he had already surreptitiously sampled its sweets. He was now introducing John to its delicacies, and had worked his protégé up to a feeling that in predatory warfare all was fair.

But the one-eyed forager—accustomed to the freedom of trooper's pillage—had failed to consider that, having paid more than one visit to the appetising spot, his depredations had been secretly marked.

Hardly had he and John dismounted, secured their mounts and fallen to at the figs—casting meantime greedy eyes at a spreading tree of pomegranates on which they purposed next to descend—when the bark of a dog was heard. Diego, hastily filled his pockets, counseled John to do the same and warned him they must make their escape. John, less wary and quite as hungry, lingered past the moment of safety. He, too, fled but the angry gardeners were hotly behind. Diego spurred his mule and belabored John's with a cudgel. The two marauders were sharply cried after and vigorously pelted with stones.

Most of these fortunately hit the mules and frightened them into so brisk a pace that the shouting peasants gave over the pursuit and Diego and John, much excited, rode on to the village, thinking they were out of danger.

And they would have been, but that Diego stopped at a wineshop for refreshment, bidding John ride on, saying he would overtake him. Having drunk his stoup of wine, Diego, instead of hastening, stopped to chuck the chin of the wench that had served him. From this diverting pastime, the one-eyed veteran was roused by cries in the street. Running to the door he saw at some distance down the highway his protégé, John, the center of an attack by half a dozen overgrown boys, and fighting valiantly on foot to hold them off. At least half a dozen more hulking men and boys were running in to help finish with the insolent young aristocrat who robbed their orchards.

From his hunting pouch, Diego, without losing an instant, drew a good-sized burr reserved for real emergencies, and, clapping it under his mule's tail, threw himself on the slow-witted beast's back. Not a moment too soon; for the astonished mule, animated

by the device, sprang ahead as if shot out of a gun. The burr, in fact, served a two-fold purpose: it brought Diego to the scene of action in double-quick time and once there, the irritated animal, when Diego jumped from his back, caught him by the halter and backed him into the mêlée, lashed out with his heels in every direction.

In the face of this onslaught, the peasants scattered like sheep. Diego, his cudgel in his free hand, struck out right and left. In a trice, shouting a ferocious Flanders war-cry, he made his way to where John, his face covered with blood, was still waging against unequal odds, a defensive warfare.

Diego and the mule ended the fight; Diego alone would have done that much. The irate farmers scattered and Diego turned his attention, first, to his frantic mule—pulling away the offending burr which he thriftily replaced in its receptacle—and then to his charge. John had lost his mule—it was munching dusty grass beside the highway at a safe distance—lost his hat and was bleeding freely from a wound in the head. Diego, as he afterward confessed, was more frightened at his charge's appearance than he had ever been on a battlefield of Flanders, since he knew that he would be held strictly to account by the stern Don Luis.

The trooper's consternation at what had happened gave way to a feeling of admiration at the fire he saw in the boy's eyes and the expression of fury and contempt he had seen in his face as he warded off, with a cudgel he had wrested from one assailant, the blows of the others. The old soldier's crest rose with the satisfaction of a seasoned campaigner, at seeing a mere boy, full of fight against a sea of odds and without a whimper at the punishment he was taking.

Diego's reputation for care of his charge fell sharply, in the front of the house, when the story became known. But John's reputation for grit rose like a tidal wave in the back of the house, when the crestfallen Diego at the kitchen fire, just after their return, opening his one good eye wide and revolving it on its fullest orbit, descanted, to an open-mouthed audience, about the way the boy fought against overwhelming odds and actually had the lumpkins on the run when he, Diego, too late, reached his side.

Doña Magdalena was a good leech. She dressed John's wounds—he was a sorry sight when he stood before her and first of all begged her not to tell Don Luis. But her liege lord had to know all and the unlucky Diego was severely examined and slated for condign punishment. Then John, duly plastered, was called upon the carpet.

"So," commented Don Luis grimly, after hearing both stories, "I perceive from Diego that Diego is all to blame. And from John that John is all to blame: since you are both culprits you shall both take proper punishment. For the present, you may go."

John, after listening to his aunt's affectionate chiding, was very penitent. He asked if he might go again before Don Luis with a plea, and when permitted to do so, begged, unsteadily, that Diego's punishment be suspended.

"And what about your own?" demanded Don Luis with a sternness of voice and manner that he did not wholly feel.

"Mine may stand," said little John, gulping—as Don Luis told it afterward—"but, dear guardian, Diego is very rheumatic. And he feels the old wound in his leg."

"Did he tell you to say that?" thundered Don Luis,

for the master knew every device of his resourceful retainer.

It was a sharp lunge at a boy. John parried it. "I have often heard him say," he replied evasively, "that this climate is hard on him."

It was not the intention to press either of the culprits too far and Don Luis dropped the subject. "I will take what you urge under advisement," said his guardian as gravely as if he had been engaged in discussion with a man of affairs.

Nothing in the larder was too good for John after the incident of the Quacos fight—clandestine sweetmeats, or suppers smuggled up to his bedroom, when under discipline. Don Luis was highly esteemed by his faithful domestic servitors, some of them followers of his old campaigns; but for John, the youthful hero of the household, they bowed to the ground.

CHAPTER XI

DEATH COMES TO THE EMPEROR

On one memorable evening, late in the month, the ingenious Diego had planned for John, early the following morning, a particularly attractive hunting trip, but fate intervened; even before nightfall, thought of it had been abandoned. Masses of dark clouds hovering all day in the north and west, overspread the valley toward evening and began to discharge a furiously heavy rain. John, searching for Diego, found him trimming asparagus in the kitchen and knowing what the lad would ask, Diego shook his head. "There's no chance, young master," he said. "The wind has shifted. It's off Biscay—an equinoctial storm. And, besides, Don Luis has sent for me to go to the convent. You may as well go to bed."

"How long will it rain so hard, Diego?"

"Two or three days like this, my boy. Then it will start in and rain like hell."

The evening went impatiently with John, until Doña Magdalena resourcefully produced from Don Luis' small collection of books a French manuscript containing the exploits of Sir Launcelot and bade John read to her.

Completely absorbed in the romance, reader and listener forgot the storm outside and the passing of the hours. It was after bedtime when a maid servant announced to Doña Magdalena a messenger from the convent-palace begging instant audience.

Her mistress rose in surprise and alarm—the messenger waited in the corridor—she ordered him admitted. With bared head and showing in the disorder of his drenched riding apparel every evidence of haste and exposure to the elements, Diego stood before her. Craving her pardon, he said that he bore only a verbal message from Don Luis—since its urgency was extreme—directing her to prepare John and send him with all expedition to the convent.

Peremptory as the message was, Doña Magdalena was too good a wife and too efficient an aide to her husband to question it. Young John was made ready instanter. To the ears of a boy craving adventure, the summons, the prospect of a night ride in such a storm, was as welcome as music to the ears of a bride.

Doña Magdalena, braving the rain, stood under the arcade while servants with torches flaring in the wind lighted the scene, and watched John, encased, to his delight, in a trooper's rig for protection, mount his horse beside Diego, wave a farewell to his aunt and ride out into the night.

Few words were exchanged on the way—few could be heard from horse to horse. Diego held a second rein on John's bridle and lighted at times by sharp flashes of lightning, the two reached the convent in safety. Diego disappeared with the horses and Don Luis, summoned to the antechamber, found John waiting, wide-eyed. Attendants had removed his dripping outer garments and his cumbersome helmet and he stood before Don Luis dressed in his black velvet, looking a youthful prince. The natural pallor of his countenance had been browned by outdoor life. It was now three weeks since Don Luis had seen the lad who curtsied to him, and the chamberlain regarded him with undisguised affection.

Sitting down, he drew John to him and spoke as he held the boy in his arms. "I have sent for you, John," he said, under the influence of strong emotion, "that you may come with me to the Emperor's chamber to-night. He is very sick—Doctor Mathys tells me he cannot live until morning. Because he is a very great man, my John—to me, a very dear master, one I have served for thirty-seven years, and because history is being made to-night in his bedchamber—I have sent for you to be present with the chosen nobles and ecclesiastics who surround his bed—to be a witness of his passing. Do you understand?"

"I do, Don Luis."

"Then come. Even this moment may be too late."

The great room into which the boy was ushered by the Emperor's chamberlain was not unfamiliar to him. Here he had stood before His Majesty listening to his questions about the hawks and sparrows and his little crossbow: and the Emperor had told him about hunting the deer and the boar. And John had watched his strange taking of snuff while he listened to His Majesty's words or answered his many questions. He remembered the stiff-looking, high-backed chairs and most of all the huge bed, on the dais, with its heavy curtains.

But now the boy saw the room in a new aspect—the uncertain light of the candles, casting grotesque shadows on the walls hung with black cloth, the shroud of silence over the men standing about the deathbed, their manner tense and their features solemn. And then—as John walked beside his guardian to the foot of the bed and peered between the shoulders of those standing there—the bed itself with its disordered coverings and piles of pillows.

And deep down among these pillows, so deep that John holding his breath had to rise on tiptoe, he beheld the wasted face and shrunken form of the greatest of the successors of Charlemagne. Breathless still, and awed, and straining higher on his toes, John could see illumined by the candles held near, the sunken but still searching eyes, the hollow cheeks and the sombre beard of the fast-failing man. Close beside him stood his physician, Henry Mathys, and his dear friend, William Van Male, both watching silently and as if eager to catch any sign or word from the passing monarch.

As mere page to Don Luis, a child among the grandees of the Empire, John could claim no privilege; but the chamberlain drew him from the foot of the bed closer to the physician at the head. In a sudden paroxysm of pain the wearied eyes closed. Charles sank into stupor; only his lips moved as if he muttered half-spoken prayers. Suddenly he roused and called out, "William!" and Van Male, hastening to his side, understood that he wished to be turned; it was the last service he was to render his master. The suppressed groan that issued from the pillows told what the effort had cost. The anxious physician looked toward the door and whispered to the chamberlain, standing in the shadow, "My lord, he is dying!"

As if to contradict the unheard words, the Emperor with a mighty shudder roused himself. His great questioning eyes swept the group nearest him—his adviser, his doctor, Don Luis, and rested an instant on the tears streaming down the face of John—the face of a boy destined to suffer much himself, filled now with tenderness and compassion at the sight of another's suffering, but little dreaming that he was at this moment witnessing the death of his own father.

Struggling with the weakness that choked his utter-

ance the dying monarch spoke. "The time has come," he said; "bring the candle and the crucifix."

There was a crowding toward the bed: John was pushed back. The two relics, reserved by the dying man for this supreme hour, were brought: the one, a taper from the shrine of Our Lady of Montserrat; the other, a crucifix taken from the dead hand of his loved wife, at Toledo. He grasped them eagerly, silently contemplated the figure of the Saviour and as silently clasped it to his bosom. Again John pushed his head forward into the press where he could see. He heard, as those closest to the bed heard, the Emperor speak again as if answering to a call: "Yo voy! Señor!" —"I come, O Lord!"

His fingers on the crucifix relaxed and as it fell from his weakened grasp it was held up before him. With his eyes fixed on the sacred emblem, he cried out once more in a loud voice: "Ay, Jesus!" and closed his eyes forever.

In the confusion of the moment the boy with his tears was again put aside.

And jostled thus about, there stood amid the array of the haughty grandees of the Spanish court, a delicately proportioned boy, all unconscious that of those crowding him back as they surrounded the death bed, he alone was closest to the dead monarch; that sprung from his loins he, a nameless prince, was looking on the passing agony of him who had given him being; that he himself, nameless among the grandees pushing around him, a boy of twelve, was destined at twenty-four to be the most talked-of man in the civilized world.

CHAPTER XII

THE MYSTERY PERSISTS

It was near break of day when John left the palace. He had seen Don Luis formally close the eyes of the dead monarch. And this youth who was to look on so many dead within so few years, had seen the first of death.

The features of the Emperor-King familiar to his young eyes—the pale brow and cheek, the slightly aquiline nose, the protruding lower jaw, the heavy Burgundian lip and the sad, thoughtful expression of the great ruler were now more peaceful as he lay in death.

With Diego, John, caped and hooded, rode once more out into the storm. The way was black; even the seasoned Fleming was forced to pick his horse's steps slowly along the steep and treacherous path.

Only one untoward sound broke in upon the downpour of equinoctial rain and the low rumble of mountain thunder; a sharp, snapping sound, intermittent, like the bark of a dog, smote the ears of the two wayfarers.

"Diego," cried John, from his horse, "what is that?"

"Hush, young master," growled the trooper; "ride faster!"

"But what is it?" persisted the boy.

"It is the accursed dog bird—away with it, and all accursed birds! I've been told, young master—but no matter."

"What have you been told?"

"I've been told that whenever one of the House of Austria dies, that bird barks every night till he is buried."

"Where is the bird, Diego?" asked John, awed.

"On the roof of that church, behind us—and be damned to it," exclaimed Diego, fervently; he was not fond of the doleful portent.

"What is the bird like, Diego?"

"Huge—big as a vulture, boy," said Diego; "and pied. There are no such birds in this part of the world. And when one of the House of Austria dies, that wicked bird flies to the death from the east, always from the east, and flies away again, always to the west. Where does it come from? Where does it go? It is a devil from hell, John, that's what it is—barking because he has lost a soul, and be damned to him! Five nights I heard that bird bark once in the Netherlands in the clear moonlight. Faster, ride faster, young master!"

It needed little admonition to make John urge his horse on. The two had gained the Quacos highway and could ride abreast. Thoroughly scared, the boy, who rode exceptionally well, now spurred on through the mud and rain till he made Diego work to keep up with him.

Doña Magdalena met John in the corridor and helped the servants remove his heavy wraps. When she assured herself he was safe and sound, she took him in her arms and kissed him. He tried to tell her of the death of their great lord, and when his voice broke, her tears fell silently on his hair.

With the funeral ceremonies, lasting for over three days, and the period of mourning complete, Don Luis' presence was still required at the palace in making the royal inventories, settling up the dead monarch's many

domestic affairs—and attending to his bequests. When these duties had been discharged, Don Luis and his household bade adieu to Estramadura, "where," he fervently sighed, "I hope I may never be called on to eat truffles and asparagus again!" His family was packed across the mountains back to Villagarcia.

Unavoidable absences of Don Luis from home placed on Doña Magdalena's shoulders the sole responsibility for John's education and drew her always nearer to her beloved ward. She persisted in holding him as much as possible to his books, which he detested, and kept a strict supervision on Diego and Gaspar, who took care of John's outdoor life. Stories of the boy's mischievous exploits continued to reach her ears but she wisely discounted the exaggerations. She made allowance for his lively disposition and carefully underlaid it with a foundation of reverence for the really serious things of life.

At the rare intervals of Don Luis' presence at home, Diego gave fine accounts of his pupil's progress in arms.

"The young master rides well, my lord," he said in answer to the foster-father's inquiries,—"exceptionally well in the style of the menage and again in the military style: horseback riding is his chief delight. And when you see the boy tilt, my lord, you will be astonished." Diego wagged his head as he stood respectfully bared before his master and passed his left hand affectionately over the bald spot on top of his head, developed by a spirited thrust from a German lance at Mühlberg. "Only," he added, regretfully, "the young master's strength is not great. He should eat more strong meat."

During the ensuing year, Diego was able to report even more marked improvement in his neophyte horse-

man; and not alone that, the boy had meantime developed in stature and strength.

During the summer following, on the eve of a great tournament which was to take place at Valladolid, the gay capital, Don Luis wrote his wife to bring John up for it; this, he added, was particularly at the request of the Princess-Regent Juana, and he adjured his wife not to fail in compliance.

John was to see for the first time one of these grandiose mediæval pageants that marked an age of chivalry, just then drawing toward its close. Only the most famous knights of Spain and Italy and Burgundy had been chosen to enter the lists; and the field, lavishly decorated with tribunes and galleries and gay with pennants and bannerettes, presented a sight magnificent to young eyes.

The invitation extended by the Princess-Regent to John had a particular intent. Much speculation had been indulged in at Court, and many tongues had been wagged, concerning this well-mannered boy who was known to live as a page in the household of Don Luis Quixada. In this wide-spread feminine curiosity, the Princess-Regent shared. She had often expressed a desire to see Don Luis' foster son. And Quixada considered that this tournament would afford her an excellent opportunity of gratifying her wish without attracting too much public attention.

When Doña Magdalena and her party took their seats in a gallery along which the Princess was to pass on the way to the royal tribune, every place of vantage was already filled with spectators. In passing the Doña and her party, the Princess, attired as a royal widow in close-fitting dark weeds and long black veil, paused to greet the wife of the chamberlain and to ask about her "page."

In Doña Magdalena's party was her niece, Doña Mariana Quixada. And at the moment that the Princess asked for John, he was hidden by the young girl's mantle. When its folds were drawn aside, and the boy was brought forward and presented to the Princess-Regent, she embraced him with much tenderness, greatly surprising the large circle of spectators whose eyes were bent on the picture—the more surprising because Juana was one with whom the rigid etiquette of Castile had become second nature. And beside her stood her guest, the Princess Carmen, a slender girl of fourteen, who looked with much curiosity and some asperity on this nameless youth for whom the Princess-Regent displayed not only unusual fondness, but now graciously invited to accompany her to the royal tribune.

John regarded the young Princess respectfully and somewhat shyly—he was intimidated by her aristocratic bearing. But he rejected the honor offered him by her aunt, the Princess-Regent, pleading that he would rather not be separated from Doña Magdalena.

Thus for some moments, all eyes in the expectant assembly were turned on the royal group and especially upon this boy who had been the object of the cold Infanta's unusual caresses. Then the trumpets of the heralds sounded; the criers took the attention of the spectators, and the jousting began.

For three hours, John sat like one in a dream, as he watched the martial contests. The fierce ridings to the encounter, the sharp crash of collision, the unhorsing of the mailed knights, set John's pulses to beating wildly. The stirring scenes embodied his very dreams and he was mentally in a daze between sleeping and waking, hardly able to assure himself that he was *not* in a dream.

When the last horseman had ridden in triumph around the field and left it; when his aunt laughingly shook his arm to waken him from his vision, John, pale with excitement, almost breathless, and with his head in a whirl, waited with his aunt for the Princess-Regent and her party to pass out. Again she paused to greet the wife of Don Luis, and to invite her and John and her niece to accompany her to the palace.

With flushed face, the boy now fell into step with Carmen, and tried to attend to her conversation, and to listen to the occasional words directed toward him by the Princess-Regent, who walked ahead with his aunt; but he was still in a dream.

The crowd, scenting in this scene a confirmation of the gossip that had filled in the capital concerning a boy reputed to be the son of the Emperor, pressed and closed about him, breaking through the lines of pikemen and musketeers who strove to keep the passage open, and even separating him by sheer force from the youthful Carmen and her party. Indeed, John narrowly escaped being trampled to death. Happily, a considerate count came to his rescue when the press had almost smothered him and holding him aloft in his arms, carried him safely to the royal coach; the mob followed to the palace.

When John again reached Villagarcia with his aunt, his head was yet in a whirl. And within a day or two, Doña Magdalena began to treat him with more ceremony than she had hitherto been wont to use. On all ensuing occasions, the seat of honor was reserved for the puzzled boy; and the alms that he had been accustomed to dispense, were raised to an amount suited to the rank of one so much discussed.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PRINCELING

St. Luke's Day falls on the 18th of October. In the year 1559 it proved the most memorable day in the Quixada household. Philip II, Prince of Asturias, returned from Bruxelles in September to assume his duties as monarch of Spain; taking up the affairs of the kingdom at Valladolid.

On the eve of St. Luke's Day, Don Luis rode down from the court to his home where he was welcomed by his ever-faithful wife. The dinner was ceremonious and the alert Doña Magdalena perceived that something more absorbing than usual was on her husband's mind. When he dismissed John for the night, he kissed him very tenderly and told him that before returning to court he would take him in the morning for a ride to the convent of San Pedro de la Espina. "The King," he added, composedly, "is coming down on a hunting expedition and we will meet him. You know there is much game in the hills about there."

To his wife, on retiring to their apartments, Don Luis was more explicit.

"You have often wondered, my dear one, whose son our young lord is," he began quietly. "To-night, I dare, for the first time to tell you. Indeed, with your alert mind, you no doubt have surmised the greater part of the secret that surrounds his birth. It has been no lack of confidence in your faithful discretion, dear Magdalena, that has led me to withhold the secret

from you so long; I have kept it in my own breast solely from a sense of duty. John, whom you have so faithfully cared for during these years, is the natural son of our dead Emperor-King, Charles V—my beloved master whom I served for so many years."

His wife, as he held her close, looked up confidingly into his face. "Just what all of the secret was, Luis, I could not wholly divine. But much of it I *did* guess after the tournament, and the marked attentions bestowed on him by her whom I now know to be his own sister, the Princess-Regent, Juana."

"Certainly his half-sister, my dear. But it is a long story—some day you shall hear it all. For to-night, let it rest at that and let us be thankful that our heavy responsibilities for his health and well-being are at an end."

"But who," asked his wife, not quite willing to be silenced, "was his mother?"

"An unmarried woman, Flemish or German; by name, Barbara Blomberg—a singer, sent to entertain the Emperor after he had become a widower. To-morrow, His Majesty the King will proclaim to the world the fact that our John is his brother. His Majesty is coming on this hunting expedition, and I have summoned our vassals, headed by Diego and Gaspar, to join the royal sport. To-morrow will be, in our lives, a memorable day, and—who knows—perhaps in the history of our beloved realm."

In the earliest morning, the estate of the Quixadas was the scene of wide-spread animation. Gathered within the courtyard and outside, were the vassals and servants, to the last man, both on foot and on horseback; and every one of them in his bravest array. Followed by this small army, Don Luis and John, having mounted their horses, rode off to the chase.

Not the slightest hint was given by the long-faithful servitor of the Emperor to his young charge as to just what now awaited him. But the speedy appearance of parties of yeomen-prickers, the cries of men and the hollow baying of the hounds in the distant hills, announced the approach of the royal cavalcade. Soon a groom appeared in the footpath before Don Luis and his party and advanced toward them, leading a very handsome horse.

Don Luis now dismounted. He bade John do the same. The gray-haired soldier knelt before the astonished page and asked leave to kiss his hand. As he did so he looked up gravely. "You will soon learn," said he, "from the King himself, why I do this."

Completely taken aback, the boy hesitated. Not until he had been urged, would he hold out his hand to be kissed. And when Don Luis desired him to mount the new horse, thus brought to him from the King, John said in banter to his faithful guardian: "Since you will have it so, you may, if you insist, hold the stirrup." But Don Luis was quite serious, and did, against John's wishes, hold the stirrup.

Putting the party in motion again, the two rode at its head toward the rocky pass of Torozos. At this point, a group of gentlemen likewise rode, from the opposite direction, into sight. Don Luis once more halted, and alighting from his horse, caused Don John to follow his example. The party facing them had halted in like manner with the exception of one rider—a short, spare man in black, with pale face and sandy beard, mounted on a black horse conspicuous for its spirit and carriage. This man advanced toward them, alone, and checked his horse when within a few paces.

"Kneel, John," said Don Luis firmly; "kneel and kiss His Majesty's hand."

As the youth obeyed, a pair of cold, gray eyes and a pouting underlip, bent over him.

It was a moment before the searching inspection was completed and the King spoke.

"Do you know, youngster," he asked quietly, "who your father was?"

Wholly at a loss, the discomfited youth could make no answer.

Regarding him with a smile, Philip dismounted. He embraced John cordially and holding him in his arms spoke gravely: "Charles the Fifth, my lord and father, young man, was also yours. You could not have had a more illustrious sire; and I am bound to acknowledge you as my brother."

He turned to the gentlemen behind him and pausing to give weight and effect to the gravity of his words, said to them: "Know and honor this youth, lords and gentlemen, *Don John of Austria,* as the natural son of my father, the Emperor, and as brother to your King."

A shout burst from the company of hunters and peasants. A great crowd had by this time gathered round the spot. Don John, at the King's desire, remounted his horse and received, as best he could in his agitation, the salutations and felicitations of the lords and gentlemen about him.

There was much pressure among the fine and bravely apparelled courtiers to be first, as they crowded eagerly around the bewildered boy, to pay homage, sincere or simulated, to the new and youthful member of the royal house.

Among his adulators, he was yet too young to realize, were those who would prove his friends and prove his enemies—a more practised mind than his might have been puzzled to separate them.

But toward the end of the scene, when the last well-turned compliment had been delivered and the last courtier's smile had been acknowledged, Don John perceived at a little distance apart from all others, two men standing with bared heads but whose eyes, bent on him, expressed unutterable things.

The face of the young prince, as he perceived them, lighted with a happy smile, and holding out his right hand, he beckoned them to him. The lords and gentlemen stared. They saw two servitors hesitatingly approach Don John—one gray and bent, the other, one-eyed and partly bald. The boy's eyes, hitherto bright and dry, glazed a little as old Gaspar tremblingly kissed his hand. And when shabby Diego with his one staring eye bent before his young prince, Don John smiled through the mist in his own eyes, and placing his left hand on Diego's as the old soldier held his right, he whispered: "Good Gaspar; faithful Diego—you shall not be forgotten!"

The King, watching, spoke to his favorite minister. "Do you see?" he murmured. "The youngster has a heart."

"Let us hope," returned the courtier drily, "that it is not too big."

"Certainly," remarked the King, ignoring the implication, "the boy sits a horse well. Much better than you, Perez."

Thus the nameless boy of Leganes and Quacos and Villagarcia, the mischievous page of the gentle Magdalena, on this feast day of St. Luke in the year 1559, entered the capital riding at the King's side and amidst the acclamations of the multitude.

CHAPTER XIV

TASTES COURT LIFE

A PRINCE—even a nameless prince—must have a household.

At Valladolid a house had been prepared for Don John and his friends, Don Luis and Doña Magdalena, and a household appointed for the young prince according to the Burgundian form brought to the Spanish court by Philip the Handsome, first of the Austrian kings, and the boy's grandfather.

In this household, Don Luis as ayo or tutor, held first place; but there was likewise a chamberlain, a steward, a master of the horse and a secretary. To those who served under the prince, were added a captain of the guard, a vice-chamberlain, besides three gentlemen and two grooms of the chamber. In a word, in attendance, service and privilege, he was treated as an Infante of Castile except as regarded the style and title and some few points of precedence.

But etiquette of princely house and royal court bore heavily on Don John. He detested ceremony and still abhorred books. Don Luis' only consolation was that in every exercise of arms, of the chase, of games of skill, whether merely quoits, riding at the ring, or contending in fence and archery, his protégé was a youth to be reckoned with.

When at sixteen, after the capital had been moved to Madrid, he was sent to the University of Alcala, together with his nephew Don Carlos, Philip's hump-

backed son, heir to the throne of Spain, and his cousin, Alexander Farnese, Prince of Parma, to finish his education, Don Luis predicted, but only to his beloved wife, that Don John was more likely in the new surroundings to finish his teachers, unless they handled him very tactfully. Among the students he was recognized as a leader. And of the three in the royal group, Don John was most fitted to take first place in sports; he was rarely outpointed with the foils, or behind in the chase, and excelled even his gallant young Italian cousin in the management of his charger.

Diego remained during these early years a privileged servitor to Don John, and the keen-eyed and experienced adventurer looked after the guns, pistols, pikes, swords and crossbows of which his master was now such a collector; and not merely a collector but an exponent in every line that concerned them. And to Don John's fowling-piece was oftenest due credit for the occasional game suppers in the apartments of the princely cousins.

The resourceful youth thus succeeded in having a good time at school despite his books. But his university career was cut short when he was recalled to court to meet still another royal cousin. And at eighteen the nameless prince was thus thrown into the maelstrom of gay court life at Madrid.

A pleasing person, an easy carriage and a naturally lively disposition fitted this scion of the House of Austria only too well for court life. A gay company soon surrounded him. His allowance, fixed by his father at thirty thousand ducats yearly, seemed generous; but for an open-handed youth at court, half-brother to the King, it was not too much.

So genial a nature was not like to be neglected in such surroundings. Don John was popular not only

with those that liked him for his personal qualities, but also with those whose purses at times needed replenishing.

Among the first in the court circle to take up the amiable princeling, moved perhaps thereto by the light of his laughing blue eyes, was the young and high-spirited Adelita, Countess Velasco, considered the handsomest woman of her day, but thought by the stricter princesses of the court to be given rather too much to gaiety and, according to the livelier tongues, inconstant in her ardours.

It was at her home that Don John met the cold and rather formal Count de Castro. "You two should know each other," said Adelita, presenting the Count. "You are both fond of the chase, both devoted to arms —at least—" she addressed Don John, "I am told that you are. "And," she added, turning to de Castro, "your exploits prove that *you* are."

"You put too much distinction on what you call my 'exploits,' when you mention them in connection with the accomplishments of His Highness." De Castro spoke without a smile but with indifference belying the moderation of his disclaimer.

"The best swordsman in Spain is so modest," smiled Adelita.

"But it *is* an injustice to him, and excuses his annoyance," retorted Don John, "even to connect our names as huntsmen or men of arms, for I can point to nothing whatever to entitle me to such an honor."

Their hostess was not to be subdued. "It's not often that we find two modest men at once, in Madrid;" she laughed, "and by the way, Count," she added, "I understand His Majesty has assigned to his brother the salutation of 'His Excellency,' rather than 'His Highness.'"

De Castro bowed quickly and slightly to acknowledge the correction, and asked Don John also quickly about the hunting around San Pedro de la Espina. He was preoccupied, but listened with a show of deference to what the younger man said; the Count was nearly ten years Don John's senior. The conversation, while it lasted, at least gave the fast-learning princeling time to study de Castro.

His manner, whether in gesture or in speech, was quick, almost abrupt and plainly nervous. His features bordered on the classic in slenderness and regularity; but what had once been a handsome nose—the nostrils still revealed what the feature once was—had been injured by a scar at the bridge said to be owing to a hunting accident.

"He's a spirited fellow," remarked Adelita as de Castro moved along. "Do you think you shall like him?" she asked. She had not yet released the lion's whelp at her side; he brought to her, and to a company which though young in years was old in life, the freshness of youth. And she liked Don John, toying with him, as it were, and inspecting him, as a Spanish connoisseur might critically appraise an Italian ring; for if he should please her, Adelita meant, as a new adventure, to wear the King's brother on her finger.

"How can I tell so soon whether I shall like him?" asked Don John. "Of course the first swordsman in Spain must be interesting."

"De Castro *is* that," assented the Countess, "but he is morbidly sensitive. I suppose he grieves as much over his broken nose as I should if it were mine. *I* think it gives him a sort of martial expression, don't you? One thinks of it as a battle scar. His family has always been unfortunate. His father had underhand communication with French cousins during the late

war. Charles—*your* father—denounced him as a traitor. He threatened to attaint him, though he never did. I want you to meet some of these ladies—oh, but there comes His Majesty's pet minister, Antonio Perez, de Castro's uncle—my! but he is a sly old fox, and fond of his scapegrace nephew! You must meet *him.*"

However little Don John knew the minister, the minister knew him, or at all events all about him that anyone knew. He cast an apparently benevolent eye on the young man and spoke to him in the modulated voice that long practice in diplomacy had robbed of much of its nasal harshness.

It was he who had taken the King's retort when riding home from the hunt. His Majesty had observed bluntly that Don John sat his horse better than Perez sat his. The remark had not been forgotten and the pride of the very competent but awkward statesman had been touched and the humiliation charged against the quite unsuspecting princeling.

"And the Princess Carmen?" asked Don John looking about after he had made the rounds under Adelita's wing.

The Countess could not repress a smile. "How naïve!" she exclaimed, so sure of her youth that she was hardly piqued at his revelation of an interest in another woman. "She is not here. I am sorry. She does not often honor my poor roof with her presence!" And when alone that night as her maid took down her hair, "I'll take *that* out of him!"

CHAPTER XV

RAKE'S PROGRESS

First impressions are best. The instinctive distrust felt by Don John at his meeting with de Castro was perhaps not greater than de Castro's dislike felt at the same time for the King's brother. But de Castro, as the weeks went by, found good reasons for modifying his own feelings; and Don John, young and careless, easily parted with his first distrust under the attentions showered on him by a new and interesting friend in the court circle.

So radical, so extraordinary a change in the fortunes of a buoyant youth could not do otherwise than incline him to giddiness in drinking the wine of a new life. And among those who essayed to make him at home in court manners and morals, de Castro was most conspicuous. At gaming tables, in the blasé court circle, the face of Don John soon became known and with the night revels of the younger nobles he was early made familiar.

De Castro himself was constant at play, and staked heavily. Don John, while never seriously infatuated with gaming, was frequently at de Castro's side and his purse was always at his friend's service. What the unsophisticated princeling enjoyed most was mingling with the gamesters, men and women, and being considered one of them—since they were clever of tongue, and possessed of a *sangfroid* that attracted him; and

their dissipations being under a court ban, gave them a shade of that clandestinity, so dear in youth.

Much, also, to Don John's liking was the society of Adelita's feminine group, and especially that of the vivacious countess herself—and more to his undoing. His attraction to her—as a pleasing woman who manifested the most open interest in him, played most temptingly upon his fast-growing vanity and offered him the greatest freedom in a field in which he had yet to take the first step—was, soon, all she could have hoped for.

And when he was quite ready to succumb, she gave him a lesson in the feminine strategy of her particular sort, as old as Circe but always new to the unarmed. When his flame, skilfully fanned by her, had blazed hotly enough to suit her, she grew suddenly cold and let him sue in vain until he was so deep in the toils he could only fall before her and meet her reluctant tears with fervent pledges of undying devotion.

Nothing of this, of course, was new to Adelita; all of it was new to her neophyte. She would wear the King's brother on her finger as she had promised herself; what she had not adequately reckoned with was a hitherto undeveloped spirit in her nameless prince.

Responding to her invitation to come to her after his friendship had been well established, Don John was ushered into Adelita's drawing room to find it brilliantly lighted and well-filled with a circle somewhat less select than pleased John. There were young men —a few old—of excellent blood, but indifferent reputation; and young women—none old—of little blood but considerable reputation. Don John, though young, was fastidious. And he felt the growing-pains of his new rank. It would be less than human nature if this were not so.

"What's the matter with you to-night?" asked Adelita after her friends had met him. His manner had been stiff. "Aren't you feeling well?"

"Quite well."

"You're not very gracious."

He maintained his reserve. "Your message gave me no intimation that you had a company to-night."

"Oh, is *that* the trouble? You ought to be complimented. I wanted my friends to meet you."

"I dislike being put on exhibition. I wish you would get rid of your friends."

She regarded him with a surprise she could hardly conceal; but Adelita was tactful. She passed the word to a few that she could trust. "My lion's cub is sulky to-night," was all she said, or needed to say; the company dispersed early.

De Castro, together with an intimate, Fernando Gomez, came in late—and in the circumstances, unfortunately late. These two saw no reason for the early break-up. De Castro tried to retard the movement. He was not successful but his sarcasm nettled both Don John and the hostess—though for different reasons and with different results. Adelita perceived rightly that the time to take rebellion in hand is when the bud burgeons—and her guests being disposed of, she invited de Castro and Gomez to join her and Don John at supper. This, for Don John, put the fat quite in the fire. He took his departure and the supper was served to three instead of four.

"What's wrong with his High Mightiness to-night?', asked de Castro.

Adelita shrugged her shoulders. "The supper tastes just as good as if he were here, doesn't it?" she laughed.

When she was again alone she said to herself, "He'll come back." She thought it possible he would come even that night. And with a resolution of pleasing him, she made a change of toilet, choosing a gown that she knew he greatly admired. Thus equipped, she waited. Not until the peep of day did she give up and retire. When she did so, she was angry and said to herself, "Very good! We'll *see* who is to do the dictating."

De Castro, however, had reasons for seeing Don John as soon as possible. Calling at his house and finding he was not there, he tried Don Carlos's apartments at the palace. The somewhat misshapen heir to the throne was himself entertaining a small company, of a kind more favored by him than approved by his elders, and here de Castro found his disgruntled Don John.

"The cards have run against me to-night, Your Excellency," complained de Castro, speaking to Don John apart from the company but without unnecessary preface. "I wonder whether you could spare me five hundred ducats?"

Inexperienced youth was flattered by the appeal. Don John, still incensed at the stubborn Adelita, felt appeased by the request from one who like de Castro carried so well-known a name at court. It made the budding prince feel his importance. "Certainly, de Castro," responded Don John without hesitation. "But I must go home for it."

"Too much trouble, I'm afraid."

"Not at all; just let me excuse myself."

As the three passed out—Gomez with the two—de Castro flung his head half around rather contemptuously at the entertainment they were leaving. "Come

with us, after you get home, if you're not sleepy. I'll show you livelier canaries than this humpbacked nephew of yours cages."

Don John professed himself not suffering for want of sleep. And the five hundred ducats being produced and given de Castro—profuse in thanks—John under the wing of the clever swordsman and the obsequious follower, Gomez, sallied forth in search of further adventure to impress his youthful importance upon court gallants. He meant besides to punish the wilful Adelita by building up a reputation in fast company as a blood not to be dictated to.

Yet, as the days passed, he could not banish a feeling of vexation, at his separation from the petulant Countess. It came to a pass of seeing—with both wanting to give in—which could hold out the longer. One day de Castro brought the subject up. "The Countess is wondering whether you are ill. She asked me to find out," he added with a suggestion of a sneer.

Don John, though secretly pleased, did not relax. "She knows where to learn the state of my health, if she so wishes," he returned stiffly.

This tart suggestion conveyed to the feminine camp, set the Countess thinking. Undue haste would defeat her purpose. She kept His Excellency waiting a few days. Then she despatched a note.

"I did not believe you could be so cruel. I know of nothing I have done to merit such treatment. And you have tortured me with fears of your possible illness.

"But de Castro tells me you are very well. Is Your Highness waiting for me to humiliate myself by *asking* you to come to see me, before you will appear? Will you come if I *do* ask you?

ADELITA."

His reply was brief but pointed with a worldly wisdom beyond his years. "Try it and see," was his laconic answer.

And Adelita, still waiting a few days for the sake of "face," wrote again: "Then come, big bear, and prepare to take the scolding you deserve. I shall keep Monday evening just for you alone—since you are so fussy—*if* you write me that you want me to."

Again the answer despatched to her was brief. "Monday evening." But it conveyed all that Adelita wanted to hear: "Just wait till I get hold of the unmannerly cub once more," she said to herself. "He shall fall harder the second time than he did the first."

But that particular assignation was never to be kept. Fate willed otherwise; Adelita had waited one day too long.

Late on Sunday evening a messenger came from the King to Don John, to inform him that the Queen Isabella would leave in the morning for Guadarrama on her way to meet her mother, Catherine de Medici; that he, the King, had preceded Her Majesty and he now enjoined Don John to attend her.

From this command there was no appeal.

CHAPTER XVI

CARMEN

Don John's household was soon in commotion: the grooms in making ready the wardrobe, the master of the horse in preparing the equipment and the captain of the guard in assembling men-at-arms and attendants. Early in the morning, a hasty note of explanation and regret was sent to Adelita, and Don John, with Don Luis, was riding in all ceremony on his way to court.

It was spring in old Castile. Despite the chill air from the snow-clad mountains to the north, the almond buds were peeping out in their pink frocks. Vineyards were still bare but the cedar was taking on a richer green. Even the uncomplaining oak seemed to welcome the sunshine that flooded the plain and brought closer the dazzling white peaks of the Guadarramas as the cavalcade headed for the mountains.

Don John had kissed his royal mistress' hand and was about to ride back and greet her attendants, when he was told that the youthful Princess Carmen with her party would join them at noon, and that the Queen wished to place her favorite niece under his protection for the journey.

The sun was past the meridian when Don John after much scanning of the road from Arcos to the foot of the mountains along which Carmen was to come, saw, even before the keen-eyed Diego, who had been warned to watch, dust rising in the distance, and

with only Diego and Gaspar set out, riding fast, to meet the Princess' party and escort her to the Queen.

In less than half an hour the three horsemen had come up with their guest. Don John, in hunter's green, and riding a spirited animal, spurred ahead to kiss Carmen's hand and give her the Queen's message of welcome. Her retinue halted some paces behind the Princess, in a glen bowered by oaks and alive with birds. The Princess, by a coincidence that both noted, was likewise attired in a close-fitting habit of green. As Don John raised his head from her hand he retained her fingers an instant in gallantry. Their eyes met; she laughed. "*Both* in green!"

"Is it too much of an honor for me, Your Highness?" he asked. "If so, I will change——"

She pointed her quick protest with a frank smile and just a suggestion of a frown. "Why change?" she demanded. "It becomes you admirably. If either of us must change, *I* will! But why?"

Her face was young, her gray eyes warm and clear in the ray of sunlight that filtered through oak leaves directly into them. Her low voice was agreeable. The velvet-like, singing Spanish of Arcos—the Spanish so intimate, so pleasantly appealing, when it is framed by pretty lips, pleased him in Carmen.

His spirits—rather low in consequence of his untoward departure—responded to all of this; even the chattering linnets and the demure, soft-voiced doves seemed, from the oaks about them, to approve of Carmen.

He put by all her apologies of tardiness. "It will whet the appetite of the young nobles all the more to see Your Highness," he said; "and," he added, bantering her as their horses ambled back, side by side, "*I* am the luckiest man in the world to-day. You—unhappy Princess!—the unluckiest girl!"

"Pray, what is it all about?"

"I am given charge over you by Her Majesty for the journey. I am responsible for your safety and well-being! How are you to bear it?"

Carmen tossed her head the least bit and laughed directly at him. "Aren't we taught to bear *all* our trials with resignation? But really, Your Excellency, I'm sorry for *you*. However," she added, "I'll try to behave myself."

"All I'm wondering is," responded Don John in like spirit, "why Her Majesty instead of putting you in *my* charge did not put *me* in yours."

The beauty of the day, the clear sky, the brilliant sun and the wine-like air, the inspiration of the scene and to the little Princess, the prospective journey, kept both lively. All the natural curiosity she felt about this handsome Prince, of mysterious birth and almost her own age, who had so suddenly been thrust into the spotlight of the royal court, put Carmen at her best. She rode beside him somewhat in awe, for though an excellent horsewoman, she was in the company of one already credited with being best among the horsemen of Spain. Her eyes never lacked fire and rarely did her tongue lack retort as she tried to keep up with his flow of gallantry and raillery—it all seemed so easy to him; but Carmen was a fast learner because she was quite unaffectedly an immensely interested pupil.

Don John, at the end of an hour, thought her clever and when they had joined the royal cavalcade, he fell back quite naturally to ride beside Carmen.

The day's weather proved fickle, and showed itself at its worst, just when it should have behaved handsomely. Don Luis had been forehanded enough—he was always that—to provide all the litters necessary for the ladies in the party—horse-litters and hand-lit-

ters; and when the company entered the mountains those on horses were advised to take litters over the pass.

Most of the ladies did so without objection. The sun was still brilliant, though the ascent looked forbidding. When Carmen halted with her escort before the litters as they were being filled, she demurred at leaving the saddle.

"Oh, Don Luis," she protested to the stout old soldier—"rusty old soldier" he called himself—"I don't want to get into a litter *here!*"

He shook his head, in disapproval. "The pass is rough; the ascent difficult; the descent dangerous, Your Highness."

"But this is the most beautiful part of the ride—over the pass," exclaimed Carmen. "*Do* let me keep my horse." She looked appealingly into Don John's eyes—he sat passive beside her. "I can make it—don't you think? I'd so love to try."

From saddle to saddle Don John looked benevolently across at her and marked the degree to which her eyes seconded her words. He spoke to Don Luis. "Her riding, Don Luis, is the best in the company—I can assure you she is no tyro."

His former guardian from his own horse raised a gloved hand and pointed a quizzical finger at him. "Will Your Excellency be responsible to Her Majesty and to me for Her Highness' safety?" he asked quietly.

Don John looked questioningly at Carmen. Out of the corner of her eyes she was looking hopefully at him. He turned to Don Luis. "I think I can take care of Her Highness," he said.

Don Luis rode away to consult the Queen. Carmen's gratitude was in her laughing look at Don John as she bit her lip. The old soldier returned. He shrugged his

shoulders: "Her Majesty puts it on me! Now go." And with a sage expression and a touch of pantomime he addressed both, "Be careful! Remember: Your Highness will be the only lady over the pass on horseback."

The chamberlain rode away. Carmen opened her eyes wide. They met those of her escort. "What a frolic! Isn't Aunt Isabella adorable?" She laughed exultingly and expanded her bosom in triumph at the thought of the distinction. "And I the only one!" she rippled. "Let's ride ahead!" Hardly waiting for an answer, the excited girl spurred away, leaving Don John to overtake her, while the surprised company looked on. At a respectful interval behind the two, rode Diego and Gaspar—not making much noise or attracting much attention, but present.

"How shall we know the pass when we reach it?" demanded Carmen, slackening her pace when her escort overtook her. He smiled paternally. "Your Highness will know it, I assure you, when you do reach it. By the way, let me look at Your Highness' girths before we go farther."

He beckoned to Diego, dismounted and with the old trooper made sure that all saddle straps were secure for her before he remounted and Diego dropped back.

But as if holding a grudge at Carmen's happiness, the elements began to disapprove. The two were crossing a narrow windswept tableland and when masses of cloud could be seen gathering above the lofty Sierras in front of them, the ascent had begun and the road had narrowed to a mere trail.

"Is this the pass?" asked Carmen, still eager.

Don John smiled: "Not yet."

The trail turned sharply and they found themselves facing a jagged and well-nigh perpendicular wall ris-

ing several hundred feet just in front of them. Don John pointed. "The pass," he said.

Carmen held her breath. "Not that wall?"

He nodded. "It isn't quite so bad as it looks."

But Carmen's confidence was disturbed. It was growing colder fast: the clouds were massed above their heads; each turn in the narrow mountain pass seemed more formidable than the one left behind. Don John took the lead in the conversation; Carmen had grown quiet, perhaps in view of what loomed ahead. But he seemed to know how to manage his thoughts and words to keep her composed and reassured.

It was a new rôle for a young man whose face was more familiar to the blades of the Madrid nobility and their feminine favorites than in the drawing-rooms of the exclusive circles to which his semi-royal rank gave him a privileged entrée.

Still, the rôle was not wholly distasteful. He rather liked the delicate air of the girlish Princess—it was already something of a novelty to him. He laughed at her unashamed spirit combined with an unconscious coquetry and a trustful leaning on him for her safety.

While these thoughts were running in his mind beneath Carmen's lively questionings and his responsive answers, the trail was growing steeper, and its windings more tortuous. Carmen concealed her growing apprehension with difficulty. But when her escort halted on a narrow ledge above a precipice that was quite frightful to the Princess, she looked aghast.

Even his laugh, to which she had now grown to look for reassurance, hardly composed her.

"This isn't bad," he said. Carmen stared dubiously at the prospect. "That's what Your Excellency always says."

"Really it isn't. It's not long: the horse footing is

sure. Look up; not down—remember that. Follow me, let your horse alone, wear the same smile you started with! Before you know it, you'll be across."

When she did reach the other side after holding her breath all the way, and stopped at his side, Carmen asked a question: "Did I do right?"

"Absolutely!" exclaimed Don John looking at the frail bit of femininity with a real admiration.

"And I did something you didn't tell me to do," she added demurely; "I said a whole lot of prayers."

She wore an expression of relief at the prospect of better going ahead; but she had failed to note what her escort had seen—the heavy storm clouds now driving over the summit above them. "Let's spur up, Your Highness," he suggested. "I'm afraid we're in for a wetting. But there's a refuge at the top of the pass if we can make it ahead of the rain."

The words were hardly out of his mouth when the shower began to pelt them in the face.

Making all possible haste, with raillery from Don John as he threw his cape over her shoulders and urged the horses, and little screams alternating with laughter from Carmen as she bent low in her saddle to shelter her face from the cold, splashing raindrops—they reached the summit and raced across a tiny mesa to the shelter of an overhanging ledge of rock.

"This will protect us till the litters get up," said Don John. "Then we'll put you in one and Gaspar and his crew will lead your horse down with the other."

"What a flood," exclaimed Carmen, drawing off a glove and dabbing her wet face with an ineffectual handkerchief.

Where they had taken shelter they saw the full sweep of the storm as it lashed the mountains. A gale of wind from the low ragged clouds poured the rain

in blinding sheets into the valleys and dashed it with violence against the peaks of the high Sierras. It was noontime but the darkness of night gradually enveloped the landscape. Angry bolts of lightning crashed from the heavens and lighted the toppling crags and bottomless voids around them.

"What a pity to spoil the day for you in this way!" exclaimed Don John in protest.

Carmen looked up quickly. "Oh, it isn't spoiled. This," she exclaimed, with a sweep of her arm at the scene, "is glorious!"

He laughed. "Aren't you afraid of the lightning?"

"Just the thunder," she confessed naïvely.

For half an hour they were marooned. As suddenly as it had risen, the storm dispersed; the sun burst through the cloud and fog patches; the cavalcade, which had been cowering under such shelter as could be found, resumed its upward way and only the roar of the swollen streams served as reminders of the torrents that had flooded the range.

Carmen, when her escort halted the first empty litter for her, again demurred. She wanted to ride down. Don John said no. It was too slippery for her horse; every run-off was flooded and strewing loose rock across the descending trail; there would be uncertain fording in spots, treacherous footing everywhere—no, said Don John firmly.

The Princess was stubborn: she pleaded and scolded; it was a contest of wills, but Don John was inflexible.

"But," she protested, resigning herself as she settled in her litter, "it's *this,* not the other, that spoils the day for me."

"I would rather bear Your Highness' reproaches now than my own if you came to harm—though Your Highness is certainly courageous!"

Her eyes lighted and expressed a reluctant resignation to her fate as well as the consolation of his tribute. "If Your Excellency really *thought* I was," she averred, "you would hardly coop me up in this thing. But no matter!" She held the curtains and her face was framed between them, as she spoke the words, and her carriers started ahead. "Only don't let them hurt my horse!"

CHAPTER XVII

THE CUB SNIFFS BLOOD

A STORM, encountered by chance together, is not the worst obstacle in the world to a budding interest between a royal princess and an adventurous prince, even though he be nameless. Sunshine might pall on such a pair, but tempest, with angry wind, flooding rain and crashing thunder, perils faced together—these stimulate rather than cloy human interest. How the other, under exposure, may face an angry sky, is a matter for curiosity to each.

Don John and Carmen met again at Valladolid where the King and the Queen remained for some weeks. The time was spent in magnificent entertainment for the royal party. Spectacular bull fights, ring-riding and tilting in which young nobles rode for the honor of their lady-loves enlivened the days, and dinners, play and dancing, the nights; the afternoons were often given by the Queen to visiting the monasteries, gardens and country houses near the city.

In these excursions she was attended by the Princess Carmen and by Don Carlos and Don John. Don Carlos, still sickly, made only a perfunctory, a bored and boring attendant; but the Queen found diversion in the saucy tilting that characterized the raillery of Carmen and the King's brother.

On one of these afternoon rides Her Majesty visited the convent of Santa Cruz. While the Queen was being received with the royal honors, a second party awaited

an audience with the Mother Superior. Upon learning who composed the Queen's escort, a gray-haired gentleman in the uniform of a Spanish naval officer waited on Don John, who had issued ahead of his company from the reception room into the convent corridor.

"I am addressing Don John of Austria, am I not?" asked the officer.

The prince returned the salutation.

"I have often heard my half-brother, the Marquess Prevost, speak of you," continued his questioner. "I am Captain Requesens of the navy, and I am honored in meeting Your Excellency—a young man of whom my brother formed so high an opinion even as a youngster!"

"I remember your brother very well—you are not unlike him. Perhaps—" Don John smiled with the comment, "a trifle sterner in aspect, as befits a man of war."

The Captain looked well the part of a Spanish sea-dog. Spare of frame, erect, sinewy, and bronzed to the color of a Morisco, formal in beard and severe in manner, yet not ungracious, Requesens made a friend, at once, of the younger man. In truth, little more than the sight of the naval uniform of his country, worn by one so evidently worthy of its traditions, was needed to enlist the quick interest of Don John; to imagine all that it embodied was like making his boyhood dreams come true.

"You, I am told," continued Captain Requesens, "are attending the Queen. I tarried at this convent to greet my sister who is a nun here."

"But, Captain, I trust you will ride back with us to Valladolid as my guest for a time——"

Requesens shook his head. "Nothing would give me more pleasure, Your Excellency. Unfortunately, I

am riding in all haste from here to rejoin my galley —there is, happily—" Requesens' face lighted with a gleam, "work ahead! I am just from Valladolid and the King."

Two words had arrested Don John. "Work ahead," he echoed, looking keenly at the officer. "Is it a naval secret?"

"Have you not heard? The Turk has invested Malta."

"Malta?" echoed Don John, thunderstruck.

"Malta—the home of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem—the island given them by *your* father after the Sultan Solyman drove them from Rhodes." The veteran's eyes blazed as he spoke. "There are seven hundred knights to defend it, with eight thousand five hundred mercenaries and militia. And Solyman is sending thirty thousand men and almost two hundred vessels under Mustapha and Piali Pasha to attack it. Are the Turkish fiends to own the whole Mediterranean? Next it will be Sicily, next Italy—what then? Thank God, Your Excellency's brother is not insensible to the danger. His Majesty has despatched orders to his Sicilian viceroy to sail with all the forces he can muster for Malta, and I bear orders to fit out with all speed an auxiliary squadron at Barcelona to succor the Knights—such," repeated the bronzed mariner, grimly, "is the work ahead."

He saw before him, drinking in his words, a man—no longer a boy—of eighteen years, and ablaze. Eyes gleaming, cheeks burning, lips in fierce repression, hand clutching the hilt of his sword.

The lion's cub, even though only in imagination, has smelled blood. "Captain," he exclaimed, almost biting the words between his teeth, "I want to go to Malta. You must take me with you."

Requesens opened his eyes in amazement. "Impossible, Your Excellency! Your youth——"

Requesens saw the young shoulders in sudden start, record the protest of the imperious will. "Age for counsel," he quoted instantly, "youth for action—I am going to Malta. I must go with you."

Requesens drew up his own shoulders. "Gladly—but: first, His Majesty's consent. I cannot take the King's brother without it!"

That night Don John was standing before his brother, Philip, King of Spain.

His request to join the Barcelona squadron had already been refused. "You are too young, my brother," said Philip firmly; "far too young to go to sea in such a venture. You do not realize the strength and ferocity of the Turk. He is well-termed, invincible at sea. No Christian armada has ever successfully resisted him. His history is a history of Christian disasters; the Mediterranean is filled with the wrecks of his enemies; their men have perished; their women have been made slaves; their boys and girls made a thousand times worse than slaves." The monarch shook his head in perplexity. "He is the scourge of Christendom."

Don John could not restrain himself. "All the more reason, Your Majesty, to oppose him with every arm that can draw a sword," he urged vehemently. "If none come back, where can I lie better than under the waters of the sea?"

"Our father's memory forbids it."

"For Your Majesty, yes. It is upon you that the honor and the succession of the House of Austria devolves. On me—what? Nothing! I am a prince without a name, destined to carry a stigma through life. To what better purpose can I put a useless exist-

ence than to devote it to the honor of God, Your Majesty, and my country?"

With flushed face and pleading heart, Don John poured forth such reasons as an appeal from his brother's decision.

The King shook his head. "You are eloquent, my brother. But you must trust to my judgment. You shall not go. Banish these thoughts of sensitiveness about your birth. You have dwelt on them before. We allow none ever to hint at it in Our presence, or in Our court. All men shall know that you are Our brother—that we are sons of a common sire and one whose equal," the King added with august pride, "Europe has not seen since Charlemange. Such is our blood! Be content."

Repulsed, cast-down, retiring respectfully from the royal presence, but unconvinced and undismayed, Don John, followed by the faithful Diego and Gaspar, rode back to his quarters. Like a ferment in his veins, the thought of the Turk fiercely coursed and bubbled. With everyone possessing any knowledge of the Turk, Don John talked. Even Diego, who admitted some years spent at sea and some experience with the Moorish corsairs, his master pumped for stories. Every naval veteran about Valladolid was cultivated in turn. But one subject could hold the attention of Don John: that was the Turk, the slaughterer, the savage formidable, the dreaded, yet to the boy of eighteen, the most fascinating subject to discuss.

Even Princess Carmen gave up. "Impossible," she said to the Queen. "Nothing will hold him—nothing but crossbows, and guns, swords and scimitars, galleys and galleasses. He is possessed!"

"I hope the dear boy obeys the King," observed the gentle Isabella.

Carmen made a little moué. "Who knows? I don't think he takes anybody into his confidence. He is as absent-minded as my own dear mother was—completely abstracted. But only say Malta, or Turk! he is on fire."

"You know his father designed him for the Church," mused Isabella.

Her niece threw up her head and laughed. "Put crossbows in swaddling clothes, broadswords in pantalets, cannon in petticoats, then—Don John in the Church!"

Carmen met him that night at an entertainment given for the Queen. "I hear you are going to desert us," she said abruptly.

"Who told you that?"

"Do you deny it?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "You would not believe me if I did."

Carmen toyed with her handkerchief. "Aunt Isabella and I both are sorry you find everything so dull here."

"I do not find everything dull." He left just enough emphasis on "every" to catch the ear. "If I told you how much your presence has enlivened the sojourn here for me, you would be surprised."

"I should."

He flushed. "I'm always saying things awkwardly. But I meant that you have been very kind to me and that I enjoy being with you. Do you believe me?"

Carmen's eyes were cast down. "Yet," she said reflectively, "you are anxious to get away!"

"Ah!" He spoke more earnestly. "You don't understand. I am a man without a name; I must make one."

"Is there not time enough?" she asked coldly. "In two weeks more we must be in France. Can't you—oh,

I ought not to say it, but you've told me I am dictatorial—can't you postpone your career-making for two weeks and be with us at the big tournament? I've told you, I'd like to see you ride."

"Carmen, it isn't the two weeks I must think of—it is the opportunity."

"An opportunity to anger the King, but none to win name or fame. If there were really a great opportunity to achieve either, do you think I should be selfish enough to try to dissuade a sensitive cousin?"

"We can't see it alike——"

"And so—" she smiled a little as she folded her fan and rose, "and so—good-night."

CHAPTER XVIII

FIASCO

HAD the lively slip of a girl, this slender, high-spirited young princess who spoke with such confidence been a prophetess, she would not have been without credit in reading the spirit of Don John.

While the fever was still burning in his heart, the court moved to Segovia. Don Carlos and the unruly Don John were on their way to the palace of the King in the wood of Segovia, when at nightfall Don John quietly left the cavalcade at Galpagar and, accompanied only by Diego and old Gaspar, galloped toward the sea, to join Requesens at Barcelona.

They rode all night. But Fate was against the fiery runaway. Whether the fever in his heart had invaded his blood, or the infection was simply physical, he was stricken near Saragossa with a fever.

When he reached Barcelona, Requesens had sailed, and the chances for overtaking him by a journey across France were desperately slender. To add to his chagrin, now came a formal order from the King—brought by de Castro—addressed to himself, and commanding him to return under pain of disgrace.

By virtue of an instinct concerning friendship and foeship that was to serve him in good stead during the remaining years of his strangely tragic life, Don John suspected—and rightly—that Perez had had some hand in the tone of that letter. But there was nothing to

do except to swallow his rage and obey the King's command.

He bit his lip and succumbed to the inevitable, but he fumed with fury; and the raillery of de Castro at the collapse of his ambitious venture was summarily checked. "When I want comment on my affairs from you, de Castro," said Don John, curtly, "I will ask for it."

De Castro—older than the wrathful princeling, whom he had been patronising as a sort of boy protégé and to whom he had been willing to give what may be termed court lessons in return for incidental pecuniary favors—opened his eyes at this display of temper. He was quite waspish enough himself to retort, but for once prudence ruled and he only treasured up his resentment without gratifying it at the moment.

There remained for the headstrong insurgent the mortification of meeting the King and making amends for his rebellious escapade. Philip was not inclined to take the matter too seriously. When Perez pulled a long face and mentioned severe precedent penalties to apply to the youngster, the King was characteristically cold. "You are unmindful, Perez, of whose blood runs in that boy's veins. He has more of his father's tumultuous spirit in him than I have; and it may be most useful to Us when a few years have steadied it. I am no soldier—he may be; and every kingdom needs one in these days. Say no more concerning penalties." And His Majesty gave an almost lisping twist to the last word that the minister well knew boded displeasure.

Don John met the royal party some three leagues from Segovia. He approached the King, frankly asked pardon for his flight to Barcelona and said he would take whatever punishment he deserved from the trouble he had caused.

To his surprise and relief, Philip only smiled, and asked him to curb his enthusiasm for a time—promising there should be ample opportunity to display it when a few more years had passed, and bade him kiss the hand of the Queen.

"Runaway!" exclaimed Isabella laughingly. "Carmen deserted! And no one to play the viol for us——"

"No one, Your Majesty?" stammered Don John.

"No one to play it as you do! Now attend my niece for the last few leagues of our long journey and forget your dreams of Turks and Moors—were they as ferocious foemen as you expected?"

He toyed with the cap in his hand. "Unhappily, Your Majesty, the closest I got to the Turks and the Moors were *in* dreams." He turned to Carmen. "Now if I can win your forgiveness for running away, I shall be happy."

"I'm afraid," retorted Carmen—her lips were as red as her eyes were gray—"I'm afraid—" she knit her brows a bit, "I've nothing to forgive. But all the same, I shan't forgive it. Should you?"

Despite the kindness of their Majesties, the runaway prince felt his position keenly. Not because he had been brought back; but because his endeavor had been a fiasco.

He still had the court gallants and ladies to face. And since every court is a hotbed of jealousies and intrigue, much under-cover ridicule was heaped on Don John and his initial campaign against "The Turk."

One courtier whose nose was particularly out of joint at this time was de Castro. Instead of riding into Segovia as a culprit in disgrace, Don John had ridden into Segovia with the royal party and at the side of the Queen's favorite niece, Carmen of Arcos. It was well known at court that de Castro was a suitor

for her hand and that Perez—keenly bent on rehabilitating the name and fortunes of his sister's family, tarnished by the French intrigue of de Castro's father—was secretly abetting the royal match for his capricious nephew and was promoting it by every means at his command.

Uncle and nephew commiserated together on this unlooked-for gentleness on the part of Philip—quite foreign to his nature—and were reduced to biding their time for future intrigues that might bring down the plumes of "the Bastard"—as he was privately termed by the de Castro following.

In the meantime, there could be in de Castro's estimation no cause to refrain from foraging on the enemy and de Castro made as many demands on Don John as boldness dictated. John, through a silly boyish vanity, honored these demands for money to an extent that surprised the inveterate gamester himself.

Deceived for the nonce by the semblance of friendship on de Castro's part, John confided to him his annoyance at the tales coming to his ears through backstairs gossip of how his name was being bandied among certain of the wits as a mere pretender—one who had been imposed by Flemish intrigue on the royal family as a relative.

De Castro volunteered to refute these slanders whenever he came in contact with them; this he managed to do in a fashion that strengthened their credit.

At the Queen's palace one evening, Don John met a well-groomed, white-haired dowager, the Duchess de Campo. The Duchess eyed him critically when he was presented by Carmen. "So this is the young man of mystery about whom I have heard so much," she observed, taking him in from head to foot.

"Pray," asked Don John tartly, "why does Your

Grace say 'of mystery?' What is there mysterious about me? Do you, too," he demanded curtly, "listen to underground court slanders?"

The old lady—as alert mentally as she was well-preserved physically—was used to saying exactly what she thought, and when and where she was pleased to say it. The timid and the double-tongued feared her. The instant defiance of the much-discussed princeling, now standing before her, was a novelty. Here was one who could give her, and did, as good as she was used to sending. Carmen, as she stood listening, held her breath; but the Duchess liked it.

"If I have done so," she said at once—and she spoke without a trace of a smile—"it is only because I have never before had the pleasure of meeting Your Excellency. Allow me to say that if ever any of this gossip has found fleeting lodgment in my thoughts you have banished it with your words. It's only the lion's cub that shows its teeth unafraid of consequence. I like your spirit. It tells me much, because I knew your august father. I hope," she added gracefully, "to know you." She nodded with a smile toward Carmen, "Her Royal Highness believes in you, doesn't she?"

"I know of no reason why Her Royal Highness should be forced to the witness stand," retorted Don John stiffly. And so saying, bowed a retreat.

"Madonna!" exclaimed the Duchess to Carmen as she watched Don John move away. "He's a firebrand, isn't he?"

"Not on any subject but that," maintained the Princess.

"I like him anyway. We shall get on very well—honest folk always do. High-spirited, isn't he? And isn't the fellow handsome? I don't see how you can

withstand him, Carmen. Or how he withstands you——"

"Your Grace!" protested the young girl, reddening.

"Oh," exclaimed the Duchess calmly, as she observed the little flurry, "I didn't mean to flush any innocent game. I only wish he were less wild; he is too well acquainted in the fast circles—you must reform him."

"Unless you wish to send me away as angry as he was, Your Grace must cease such comment," exclaimed Carmen with no little spirit herself.

De Campo was not easily upset. She took Carmen's slender hand, laid it on her own white forearm and patted it. "Don't mind an old woman, dear: I knew your mother. And," she added, with affectionate malice, nodding in the direction of Don John as Carmen prepared to make her escape, "I perceive you *both* have spirit—that's too, as it should be."

Don John met Carmen again at the royal supper. His talk reverted to the meeting with the Duchess.

"Cattish, isn't she?"

Carmen tried to mollify him but could not. "At least," he said at the end, "she's rudely honest. But you can see how the talk is, all over the court. The backbiters would deny me even my own father. If I can only catch one of the slanderers and insult him!"

The princess shrank from his anger. "Please," she begged, "don't be so bitter. They have to talk about something. They will forget you, presently, and all fall to slandering someone else."

"But it isn't fair that they should *all* escape me. I may get one yet."

CHAPTER XIX

TO SEA

"I HEAR," observed the Duchess de Campo to de Castro, and without any introductory remarks, "that you are greatly taken with the Princess Carmen."

De Castro shrugged his shoulders. "I should be more interested to hear that Her Royal Highness was greatly taken with me."

His boldness startled even the redoubtable Duchess. "Such assurance!" she exclaimed. And after a pause, and to nettle her impudent caller, "You know, of course, you have a rival——"

He pricked up his ears. "A rival?"

"A certain care-free young prince—whom I shall not name. But look out!"

De Castro knit his brows. He went in his mind over the young men he could think of. "I can't imagine." Then his face lighted. "Don John?"

"None other."

"But that's nonsense."

"I never talk nonsense."

Again he raised his eyebrows and shoulders. "Has he the permission," asked de Castro blandly, "of the Countess Velasco?"

De Campo drew herself up. "You don't mean he is running there again?" she exclaimed in disgust.

"I met him there last night: he is her favorite lately. She pays—" he paused for a word, "ardent court, you know, when she is interested."

"De Castro," the old lady spoke her mind with a snap, "you started him with that creature."

De Castro grinned. "He didn't need much pushing."

"He is naturally of a gay disposition," maintained the Duchess defensively, "and would fall easily into such a net. You, de Castro," she continued calmly, "are not naturally gay. You are only naturally vicious."

"If Your Highness should think of anything to add to that—will you write me?"

"I never write unpleasant things—nor do I *say* them," observed the Duchess, lifting her fan, "behind peoples' backs."

"I never could like that man," she murmured to Doña Magdalena, who joined her at the moment that de Castro disappeared. "And since that clever boy—whoever he was—threw a stone at him and broke his nose, I can't bear the sight of him. And now he's retailing gossip about your Don John. Has the youngster really lost his head and gone wild with his gaming and women?"

The gentle Doña Magdalena always took her troubles to her faithful husband. Don Luis listened to her apprehension patiently. "He is certainly running wild but what other atmosphere is there to breathe among the young court gallants? Boys, my dearest, are exactly like colts—you never can tell what they will do next. We must be patient. The King is fond of him, but he has enemies. Perez doesn't like him—he is jealous of anyone who may interfere with the career of his scapegrace nephew, de Castro, and he had him slated for the command of the fleet—which it now seems Don John, if he doesn't stub his toe, may get himself.

"He has perhaps lost his head. The trouble is that

if a lad with John's spirit goes wrong, he goes far wrong; when, if he can be switched, he makes an asset for the kingdom. Let us have patience; some time he will shuffle the cards."

Doña Magdalena shook her head. "I fear I have lost my dear boy."

But if he had fallen from the ideals of his foster-mother, he had lost none of his affection for her. If his house was gay, his heart never cooled toward her. And when Don Luis, now master of the King's horse, learned that Perez had poisoned the ear of Philip with tales of his brother's excesses, it was Doña Magdalena who inspired her husband to go to the rescue of Don John's reputation with the King and salvage such portions of it as were still recoverable. As a result, Philip called his brother before him and only warned him.

In spite of his recklessness, real and imputed, Don John had behind him a following that never failed in loyalty. From a generous nature coupled with a disposition only rarely ruffled, a magnum of faults will not easily estrange youthful sympathy; and the young prince kept his friends. De Castro still called on him for ducats and got them. Only Don Carlos grew savage over the way in which the generosity of his favorite uncle was imposed on by worthless gamesters.

One night after a round of street adventure, of which Don Carlos was over-fond and in which Don John joined out of camaraderie and not out of interest, the two princes were sitting in Don John's room, over a late supper, when Diego announced Gomez and ushered him in. He came as a messenger from de Castro with a request for two hundred ducats. It happened

that both royal youths had themselves been unlucky at play that night, and Carlos had not been fortunate in his street brawls—the moment was inauspicious.

"What a devil!" exclaimed Don Carlos. "Have we nothing to do but dig up money for de Castro?"

Gomez bowed: "I was charged to ask Don John only, for an accommodation—not your Royal Highness," he submitted with just as much insolence and just as little deference as he dared.

Don John, usually amiable, became infected with something of his nephew's choler. "Has de Castro grown so mighty that he employs an ambassador to negotiate his loans?" he demanded. "Tell him when he wants money to come for it himself."

"Better not tell him that," interpolated the royal heir gruffly—"he'll come!"

Gomez bowed himself out. De Castro was furious but said nothing. Within a week he had begun working on Don Carlos, and knowing his fondness for the street at night, persuaded him to go out; the two dragged Don John along. He took only Diego with him; the others were followed by four knaves of varying degrees of turpitude.

The night went all too peacefully for the adventurers until nearly spent. Towards morning an unlucky baker on his morning rounds, chancing unfortunately to be accompanied by his daughter, a girl of sixteen, was spied by Don Carlos.

The party slunk hastily into cover and lay in wait between two buildings. When the baker drew near—he and his daughter laden with baskets of bread—Don Carlos dashed out, seized the daughter in his arms and showered her rudely with kisses. Dropping her baskets, the unfortunate girl screamed. As she strug-

gled to free herself, her father, infuriated, dropping his own burdens, rushed to her assistance. The four knaves thereupon set on him together.

But they found they had caught a tartar. The baker was powerful and at once gave a good account of himself, meantime yelling loudly for the watch. By the merest chance, Don John, having loitered behind the rest of the party, was half a block away when the fracas began. Diego was with the retainers of de Castro and the royal prince but took no part in the attack.

The fight went against the four trusties and in favor of the infuriated baker. The daughter had freed herself from Don Carlos and was screaming and pummeling him with her fists. De Castro, who had stood an amused spectator, now drew his sword and advancing, commanded the baker to desist. But the baker having wrenched a stave from one of his assailants, continued to lay about him, and as the knaves drew back, turned on de Castro and attempted despite de Castro's warnings to strike his sword from his hand. The agile swordsman feinted, sprang aside and as the baker advanced, ran him through.

The watch, with lanterns, were running up the street: de Castro, seizing Don Carlos, hurried away. Their retainers had already taken to their heels. When the watch arrived they found the baker, supported by the arm of Don John, in his death agony, his daughter crying over him piteously.

The wounded man, his eyes glazed with the film of death, regarded Don John in the dim light with mad terror. "He!" he cried. "This man stabbed me!" Blood choked his utterance but Don John eased his dying moments as best he could until a final gasp and a shudder marked the end. The young prince

rose to his feet well covered with blood. While Diego restrained the girl who would have struck Don John, the Prince spoke collectedly to the head of the watch. "The poor man was beside himself in accusing me. I am Don John of Austria. Look you, he has been stabbed. Draw my sword and my dagger. You will see there is no stain of blood on either."

The captain of the watch proved the truth of the assertion. "I can tell you nothing," added Don John, "since I was coming up only at the moment you came. Take this man home. See that he has burial and look to me for the charge. Diego, gather up the loaves and help the girl home."

Perez took a hand in the investigation of the murder. From one of de Castro's retainers, in his uncle's pay at all times a spy, he knew who had stabbed the baker, but from the captain of the watch he had story enough to bring Don John into it.

In response to Perez' summons, Don John appeared accompanied by Don Luis, who, not behindhand in the interests of his former charge, likewise had all the facts in the case—under strictest pledge of secrecy—from Diego. And bearing no love himself for the favorite minister, the master of horse to His Majesty meant to see that no blame should fall on Don John.

When examined by the wily Perez, Don John coldly denied any part in the fatal brawl, but declined with equal coldness to say who was guilty—though he well knew.

The orphaned daughter was brought in to identify Don John but under questioning by Don Luis admitted that the man that did the stabbing was masked, while the man who aided her father was not masked.

Again Don John was hypocritically warned to reveal the name of the culprit, Perez feeling quite sure that

the Prince's well-known code of honor would protect his own guilty nephew. And again Don John bluntly refused to speak.

Don Luis with his protégé left the apartments of state feeling that they had the best of it. But the Duke had elicited enough to make a plausible story to lay before the King, emphasising the recklessness in general of Don John's conduct and the strong probability that he was guilty. The King, already anxious over the increasingly evil courses of his own son, Don Carlos, determined in a fit of anger to check this scandalous night prowling by making an example of Don John: he was adjudged guilty, condemned to pay heavy damages to the baker's family and to be banished for six months from court.

The rage and humiliation he felt arose not alone from the false accusation; to him, it was rather the conviction that it was imposed on him largely because of the stain on his escutcheon which made him a convenient scapegoat for the sins of others. It needed all the pleading and all the counsel of the sage Don Luis to keep his wrath at all within bounds. Even in this, he might have failed had it not been for the motherly kindness of Doña Magdalena who wrestled with her foster-son and showed him how profitable the period of banishment might be made.

"You are destined, my child, for a career of arms—that has long been apparent to us who know you best—the Church is not for you. You incline to the sea. What do you know about ships and galleys and the sea? No more than I do!

"Take, then, these six months at Barcelona aboard ship and fit yourself for naval command; learn every detail of naval practice as my Don Luis learned the business of a soldier, following before leading. What

good comes to your future from this purposeless present life? None! Do this that I counsel and make these six months the most profitable of your existence. Requesens has been wounded and is back from Malta. He loves you—as we love you. Go to him."

CHAPTER XX

POINT D'HONNEUR

Six months later almost to a day, Don John presented himself again to his devoted foster-mother. He was just come from Barcelona, taller, bronzed, better-looking for having changed the dissipations of court life for the strict discipline and the stern regimen of a sailor's life.

He laughed at Doña Magdalena's surprised, happy and enthusiastic greeting. She even broke the bounds of formality enough to embrace and kiss him. While she listened with delight to his story, she realized he was now all she had hoped for when he was her own boy, as she loved to call him.

"And to-night you are, of all nights, well come. Carmen receives to-night with the Queen. Don Luis and I are going—you shall go with us."

She would take no refusal. Of the older court set, none stood in higher esteem than Don Luis and Doña Magdalena, and when they entered the crowded drawing-room, accompanied by Don John after his long exile, the three, especially the prince, attracted immediate and whispered attention. When Don John paid his homage to the Queen, Carmen, at her side, was engaged with de Castro. While his aunt conversed with Her Majesty, and Don John stood at his old guardian's side, his eyes were observing the confident air which marked de Castro's attitude toward the budding princess.

For the first time in his life a wave of angry jealousy swept over John; and if waves of emotion swept over him at all, they were tidal waves. It flashed upon him all at once that while he had been "doing time" for an offense of de Castro's, the real culprit had been forwarding himself in the graces of Carmen. And from Doña Magdalena's letters he had learned that this was a match on which Perez had set his heart for his troublesome nephew.

From that moment, he cordially detested de Castro. It was this hot feeling of jealousy, rather than the one of real ardor for Carmen, that made a quick glance from her eyes as she encountered his while listening to de Castro, so gratifying. As soon as he could disengage himself he turned to Carmen and de Castro.

Six months had changed others besides himself. The petite Princess Carmen of Arcos was now six months more sophisticated in a court life which, though rigidly formal in more than one aspect, was nevertheless one of the gayest. Thus, Carmen, while preserving the charm of her reserve, knew exactly what she wanted and knew even better how to angle for it. In consequence, she evinced at once a marked interest in this wild brother of the King into whose company she had already been so pleasantly thrown.

Without a moment's hesitation, while talking and listening to de Castro, she welcomed Don John to her side. Her delicate stratagem, too subtle for rude words, she accomplished while laughing and talking to de Castro, and using her fan in her right hand—by extending her left hand with the arm half raised, as if in a gesture illustrating her conversation—toward Don John.

It could not be defined as anything more than an impulsive gesture save for the fact than an admirer

was watching her, that her middle fingers beat a familiar little tremolo, and that her eyes, deeply engaged with the suitor she was addressing, managed for just a fraction of a second to flash a glance into another's eyes, and flash back to join de Castro's mirth without his having missed them.

Don John's response was immediate. He came up behind de Castro. Carmen's eyes now engaged his own, quite unabashed, and that slender left arm extended and the slender fingers of the left hand beat the same tremolo in the air with undisguised freedom.

De Castro whirled as if to challenge the newcomer, whoever he might be. Nothing could have been more disconcerting in the circumstances than to face Don John. His lips tightened, but he summoned his set smile and extended his hand in greeting.

However, another hand was out—the left hand of a princess of the blood with the white fingers still beating the tattoo of encouragement.

Don John, gracefully ceremonious, raised this hand to his warm lips. "Welcome, prodigal!" Carmen smiled.

He kept her fingers within his own. "If you welcome me," he returned, with an intimate tone, "what need I ask of others?"

She tossed her head: "Don't dissemble; you know everybody is dying to welcome you—and hear all about Barcelona and the Turks and Moors. Aren't they, de Castro?"

"*I* am, certainly," protested the courtier, with a smile of lifted eyebrows. He promptly offered as much of welcome, carefully administered, as Don John seemed disposed to digest—which was not an inordinate quantity. Two dogs meeting in the presence of a feminine friend, show their feelings at once; two men, in such

circumstances, if sophisticated, are more restrained—but understand each other's feelings quite as well.

Not even the petite Princess could create more than a veneered atmosphere of cordiality about her while her two admirers lingered. But just the same, she held on to Don John until de Castro gave up—then she enlisted all her resources to reassure Don John, ending with a promise—knowing him to be fond of dogs—that if he would come to her salon that night a week, she would show him a Russian wolf hound sent to her by a Medici cousin in France. John confessed he knew nothing whatever about Russia, but should not only like to come but should like to see a new breed of dog.

"I hope you believe, Your Highness," he added, when about to take leave of her, "that I had nothing whatever to do with the stabbing of that unfortunate baker."

She lowered her voice. "I know you had not," she returned in a tone of perfect confidence; "Doña Magdalena has told me the whole story."

He expressed surprise. "Where did she get it?"

Carmen smiled. "Such curiosity! But you won't disappoint me for the salon, will you?"

"I couldn't disappoint you, dear Princess, without hating myself even worse than I do."

"What nonsense. Come early," she suggested, smiling him away.

Not quite everyone welcomed the so-called prodigal. His enemies had not lost the opportunity to disparage him and if so much as one of these showed his back to Don John, he fumed over it. In vain Doña Magdalena tried to quiet him—his blood was too hot. De Castro tried to re-establish their old relations of intimacy—he found Don John cold. Still a considerable debtor to the

sensitive prince, the courtier made some pretense of paying up—Don John received his messengers with contempt.

At the palace of the Princess Carmen, within the week, the two men met again. Her receptions drew large companies and this night, memorable to the hostess, was no exception. Don John had taken her at her word; he came early. Carmen, in her own anteroom, had explained the Russian dog to him and the dog's name, Tsar, a word just then taking root in Spain. Carmen was standing apart with Don John in a recessed window. From a distant alcove came the faint strains of music for dancing. The dog of the Princess stood between them, Don John's hand on his head while he and Carmen conversed. To the eye of a jealous suitor, there was an appearance of understanding between the two as they chatted and laughed at the moment de Castro entered the anteroom. Since it led to Carmen's private apartments, the little room was rather a privileged place, but de Castro made any privilege his own; and the sight of Don John within so favored a precinct infuriated him.

He made himself evident by advancing far enough, and brusquely enough, to demand a greeting from Carmen—which she gave him, cordially—and then, somewhat quickly and ostentatiously, he bowed himself away. Don John looked after the deserter; his eyelids drooped, and his features melted into a smile that was restful—one that Carmen had learned to know. "I wonder," he mused, "whether bad luck has been after him all day?"

Carmen professed denseness. "What does Your Excellency mean?"

"He looked so ferocious; the way your others guests will be looking if I don't surrender you, pretty soon.

Shall I have the honor of returning to the salon with you?"

"You might, if it were an honor!"

"How about a galliard?"

Carmen looked up at him as if to determine whether he really meant it. Then she lifted her shoulders with piquant indifference. "Later, perhaps," was all she said.

But Don John, before the evening was over, claimed the dance. Carmen tried to beg off. "Why?" he demanded. She tried to evade but he was persistent. "If you must know," she said at last, "I have just declined a galliard with another guest."

"I know who it was," he declared. "That is no reason for breaking your promise to me." At times there was a coldness in his tone and manner that Carmen had learned to recognise. It was as if, almost imperious at moments, he demanded the homage due a son of his father; Carmen could feel it and never ignored it.

"Oh, was it a promise?" she parried. She glanced at the floor, filled with dancers: the soft music was alluringly gay. She smiled; barely extended a hand; murmured assent. "Come on, then."

De Castro was talking with the Duchess—her eye spotted the new couple. For a moment she watched them in silence. "The nameless one is certainly a dancer," observed his companion at length. "Carmen seems to respond perfectly to his step. And you, de Castro, who dance so well yourself—why are you not on the floor?"

Had the Duchess meant to sprinkle salt on de Castro's fresh wound of jealousy, she could not have succeeded better; and the old lady usually knew what she was doing and usually meant to do it.

Don John, flushed with success and stimulated by jealousy as well as by the favor of Carmen, had led her again to the recessed window of the early evening. A refreshment was served to them. Tsar lay at the drawing room entrance to the room. De Castro, resolved to break up the tête-à-tête, had followed with the Duchess, who, perhaps under the excuse of seeking Carmen, sniffed a scene.

As de Castro crossed the threshold he pushed Tsar roughly aside with his foot. The dog sprang up with a yelp of pain. "Oh!" protested Carmen. "Please spare my dog. You seem to dislike him."

"Not at all, Your Highness. He's a thoroughbred; I like thoroughbreds. Look at him," he continued pleasantly, as the group regarded the well-favored animal. "How easy to see in him, though only a dog, the marks of good blood and proper breed. It's only mongrels that are a nuisance whether four-legged or only—" he laughed harshly, "two-legged."

Carmen took alarm. She handed her cup to the serving man and spoke quickly. "I must rejoin my guests. Come, all of you." So saying, she led the way to the drawing room. The Duchess, chattering, was at her side. De Castro checked Don John. "A moment!" he said to him. "You seem to have overlooked a minor point in thoroughbred etiquette, Your Excellency. No bastard should aspire to the hand of Her Royal Highness."

Don John was at no loss for a retort. "Still less," he returned civilly and in equally restrained tones, "should the son of a traitor to Spain."

CHAPTER XXI

CARMEN INTERVENES

Don John was sitting with his nephew Don Carlos, and his nephew and chum Alexander Farnese, Prince of Parma, in his lounging room at three o'clock the same morning when Gomez was announced.

Farnese sprang to his feet. "I'd begun to think the braggart would never come," he exclaimed. "Now—action! Let me talk to him, cousin." He addressed Don John.

But Don Carlos likewise sprang to his feet. "No!" he protested, "let *me* see him."

It devolved on Don John to settle the dispute. "You are both very good. But you know, Don Carlos, how bitterly opposed my brother, the King—your father—is to the duel. As his only heir, it would be anything but fitting that you should appear even as a second on a field of honor. You must restrain yourself, my nephew. Let our Italian cousin arrange with Gomez."

The princes, standing in the middle of the room, conferred together. All three were boys in years; two of them were men alive at every point—vigorous and capable—their swords yet unfleshed on fields of glory; yet Europe and more than Europe, was before long to ring with their names.

"Let there be no delay in the meeting," was the instruction of Don John to his handsome nephew—for Farnese's mother, the bold and able Margaret of

Austria, was a natural daughter of his own father, Charles V.

Young Farnese eyed his uncle as if he envied him. "What weapons do we name, Your Excellency?"

The answer came without an instant's excitement or hesitation. "Swords."

"Swords?" echoed Farnese aghast.

"Swords," repeated Don John, smiling but unstirred.

"No!" protested his companions together. "Do you not know," demanded the Italian vehemently, "that de Castro is the best man in Spain with a sword? Pistols! Not swords! My pistols, deadly, accurate—and you, a master with them. Have I not seen you take the head of a sparrow at twenty paces—what else can you be thinking of than my pistols?"

"Your pistols are excellent—I have reason to know. But I mean to face this butcher with his own knives. If I fail to give him a lesson this time I will do it some time in the future."

Farnese shook his head vigorously. "Give de Castro a lesson! I only hope he doesn't give you one."

"If he does, be sure I shall profit by it. Patience! Go to Gomez. Obey my wishes, Cousin of Italy, and report back. Remember, an early meeting."

The fiery Italian took the order with indignation and his manner toward Gomez was characterized by as much of contempt and tempered with as little of cordiality as his sense of etiquette would allow.

It was agreed that the two men should meet at five in the morning, since if an inkling of the affair reached the King, there would be arrests and no meeting: the place chosen was the old cemetery immediately back of the abandoned Augustinian monastery; Don John was to be attended by Don Carlos, who could by no persuasion be kept out of it. De Castro had chosen

Gomez and a roystering friend known as "big Lorente" to attend him and was to bring a surgeon. With all thus arranged, the young and ambitious shoots of warlike sires again sat in Don John's room drinking coffee instead of wine, and watching the clock.

It was nearing four when Don John's secretary asked for a private word with his lord and the two left the room together.

In the half lighted corridor, Don John waited for the news. "A high personage seeks an interview with Your Excellency—" began the secretary.

"Already betrayed?" expostulated Don John indignantly.

The secretary expressed a negative. "Not so. This is a very personal and confidential matter, Your Excellency."

"Who seeks an interview at this hour with me?" The suspicious princeling spoke the words sharply; they were freighted with resentment.

His secretary answered softly but evasively. "I have not been entrusted with her name——"

"*Her* name? A lady?"

"Of degree."

"Not Doña Magdalena, surely," exclaimed Don John, whose mind ran only on anyone likely to oppose his dangerous project.

"No, Your Excellency. Will you see and speak to her messenger?"

"Lead the way."

"She is waiting—in the patio."

Don John strode rapidly to the rear of the house down the outside flight of steps to the courtyard. Within it, a fountain splashed in the rays of a worn and weary moon. Don John walked on within the shadow of the arcade. A woman, veiled beyond pos-

sibility of recognition, stepped doubtfully from the concealment of a column.

"Don John?"

She spoke the words low and guardedly, but her voice betrayed her.

"Your Highness! Tell me how I can serve you," exclaimed her surprised auditor.

"De Castro quarreled with you to-night. I feared the outcome. I came to beg you to have nothing to do with that man."

"I hope to have little," Don John returned, evasively.

"Knowing somewhat Your Excellency's high spirit, I feared you might call him out."

Don John laughed almost silently. "He has spared me that trouble by calling me out."

Carmen suppressed a little exclamation. "Then I beg of Your Excellency to pay no attention to him. He is so far beneath you in rank——"

"He does not so consider himself," interposed Don John drily.

"But he *is*." Her words came faster and faster with no attempt at concealment except a suppression of her voice, so that it should not carry beyond the ear for which it was meant. "And not alone that," she hurried on. "If he were honorable, if he were of good repute, if he were your equal in years, I should not have dared do what I know I should not have done, to-night. But he is much older, he is a deadly duelist—it is not fair, not right——"

She checked her outburst, not as if she had said all but as if unequal of saying more.

The Prince stepped closer and spoke low and seriously. "Who but Your Highness would have done as much as this for *me?*" he asked. "Believe me, I un-

derstand what this act of kindness has cost—I shall never forget it.

"But I am already committed beyond possibility of retreat, even if I could wish to retreat; and I cannot truthfully say I would wish to. Since he has challenged me and—" he hesitated for a moment, "since there is bad blood between us, anyway—it is better we *should* meet. I call it 'bad blood,' but Carmen," he spoke more intensely as he uttered her name, "it is something more than that. From the first moment I met that man I have felt an instinctive aversion to him: I doubt not, he has felt as much toward me. I almost feel as if he must have come into my life some time, somewhere before—yet I know not, when or how. We have tried to patch up a friendship——"

"Chiefly," interposed the Princess heatedly, "chiefly," she repeated, with contempt for him of whom she spoke, "one of imposition on his part and prodigal generosity on the part of Your Excellency. But since he has challenged you—do not choose swords."

"I *have* chosen swords."

"Don John!" She turned away her head with the words. "I am too late!" For an instant she strove for self-control, then added: "Forgive this unmaidenly thing. I will go."

He saw what the words cost and, putting out his hand, checked her. "Carmen—" Reaching down within the folds of her veil he found and disentangled her own right hand—it was icy cold. "Carmen," he repeated, "listen. I can't tell others what is under it all—I tell *you,* since you have done so great a kindness for me. I am carrying and must always carry this stain upon my birth that makes me the byword of fools. I try at times to think it is forgotten. It

never is—never! This low adventurer only blurted out to-night what everybody is thinking, though too politic or polite to express open contempt. I am going out in the morning to remove as much of that stain as I can with a sword; and if I survive I shall meet with a sword every challenge to my birth. In this day and at this court, what has a nameless prince to live for, Carmen?"

"Why," she protested, "do you let that thought rankle in your heart?"

"Because there is no future for me beyond a death as obscure as my birth. If I meet it at the hands of a common gambler what better do I deserve?"

"Everything!" she exclaimed with fiery spirit. "Is *this* court all of life—*this* the only inspiration to achieve a name among men? Something tells me—told me long ago, that you will make the name denied by your birth, that you will make the world realize that the blood of an illustrious father runs in your veins. Is the future with all its possibilities nothing? Is the esteem of friends—nothing?"

Carried by the ardor of her feelings, she stopped, suddenly conscious that her words were sweeping her too far.

He drew himself up with a start. "*That,* indeed, is a consolation, dearest of friends. But the stain is always there. It is that, I think, that drives men such as I to things that make them unworthy of a friendship such as yours——"

She drew her hand from his hand and stepped back as if frightened. "I must go. I am doing more harm than good—when do you meet him?"

"At five o'clock."

"At five o'clock! Until five and after five, I shall be on my knees to our Blessed Mother in prayer!"

"Lovely child!" he murmured. "You give me strength and courage. You say you ought not to have come. It is the sweetest, bravest thing you have ever done in your life. I ought not to dare this liberty, Your Highness; but as you have done—because your heart so willed—I shall do."

He caught her, despite her silent struggles, in his arms. Silent himself and irresistible, he drew her close. With one hand he gently, rapidly parted the folds of her heavy veiling, found her cheek with his finger and as she half fainted in her excitement, pressed his lips to hers.

Like to a frightened bird, came that overwhelming moment to the startled girl. Her pulse fluttering, her senses reeling now in an ecstasy of surrender as his arms folded her to him. Then revulsion, fear, dread reality overcame her. She pushed him back. But they had tasted life together. "Carmen," he whispered, "I must take you home. Who is with you?"

"No, no," she protested, trying to control her emotion. "Both my faithful ladies are in waiting. My guard is at the gate. You must not take a step with me. Please, please, John, let me go. I am choking."

Hastily veiling her face as if the very night might see her burning lips, as if the very stars might hear the furious beating of her heart, she spoke to him the last words she was ever to speak. It was a troubled, half-laughing, half-sorrowful little tone, suppressed almost to a whisper that fell upon his ears. "I came here, indeed, a child. I am leaving, alas, a woman!"

CHAPTER XXII

ON THE FIELD

THE two men, attended, met in the oak copse of the cemetery once attached to the abandoned monastery.

Many a toothless and fleshless underground friar, lying in his shallow grave in the chill nakedness of his bones, waiting in humility for the Judgment trump, might have risen in amazement that early morning on hearing the hot clash of steel so close above. What confusion, what amazement would have overwhelmed the two bitterly earnest men, bared to the waist and contending in the lightning play of their swords, each to reach the life-stream of the other, had those friars whose dust they trampled so rudely underfoot, risen with grinning skulls to watch the angry struggle.

There was no flippancy of combat in the encounter. The nameless son of the dead Emperor knew well de Castro's mood and the malevolence of his temper; for no sooner were the swords crossed than the older and more practised duellist began a deadly attack. Don John was forced to enlist every resource of defense to avoid being spitted on de Castro's thirsty blade. In the manner of the day, the men fought with swords and in their left hands, stout daggers—these chiefly for defense but deadly in a thrust if a blunder laid the adversary open to one.

Don John had now reason to realize the worth of

the ceaseless drilling of Diego on footwork in a sword combat. "Win your fights with your feet as well as your wrists, young master," the one-eyed guardsman would growl at his pupil. His feet alone saved the princeling from disaster, that day, for de Castro himself was a master of footwork on the field.

Farnese had never before seen de Castro in action and scarcely a minute had passed before the Italian's face grew long as he perceived what manner of man his cousin of Austria had engaged. De Castro's reach was formidable and his action incredibly fast. For what seemed a shockingly long time to Farnese there was not a let-up in his attack—it was ferocious; the young contender must bear a charmed life, he thought, if he could continue to parry thrusts that threatened him like bolts of lightning.

But watching narrowly, the keen-eyed Italian could perceive no serious weakness in the defense of his tyro cousin. As if resigning himself to a situation of being at least partly outclassed, Don John did not mean to be confused or outgeneralled. The two men, feinting, lunging, and parrying, dancing alternately like ballet masters and landing heavily on both feet for their thrusts, never for a moment abated the fury of their encounter.

At the height of a very sharp exchange, with Farnese's eyes starting from his head, de Castro pushed in a bit too boldly—his lunge passed Don John's shoulder and before the breathless spectators could realize it, the point of Don John's blade had laid open de Castro's left cheek; but the surgeon came forward, and while Don John profited by the breathing spell, standing, point down, examined the slash on de Castro.

The enraged swordsman raved and demanded the fight go on. The seconds conferred, listened to the

surgeon who with styptics and a plaster had patched up the slight damage, and the duel was resumed.

Infuriated by what he considered the disgrace of being pinked by a beginner, de Castro again threw himself into the encounter and rushed at his enemy almost before the signal had been given—drove back Don John and before the younger man had regained his poise ran him through the sword arm.

Again the seconds crossed their swords between the contenders. The surgeon ran forward. De Castro's blade had pricked an artery, and Gomez, doubtless glad that his hitherto undefeated principal had escaped so nearly unscathed at the hands of so surprisingly handy a youngster, demanded that the duel cease; in this he was backed both by the surgeon and Farnese.

While the surgeon hastily worked at the arm of Don John, Gomez and Big Lorente approached Farnese and Don Carlos.

"Is the Prince satisfied?" asked Gomez with a smile.

"I haven't asked him," retorted Franese.

"Count de Castro is willing to shake hands with him, in spite of the fact that he feels that the awkward t —I suppose we must say accidental—thrust of Don John has disfigured him somewhat."

"Awkward!" exclaimed the Italian incensed. "Accidental! That was one of the prettiest things I ever saw. Talk to Don John yourself but I advise you to say nothing about awkwardness."

Gomez had his instructions and walking over to where Don John stood, repeated with unpleasant deference, his overtures to him.

"You ask whether I am satisfied. I will not shake hands with him."

"But Your Excellency—it is the code!" protested the surprised second.

"Damn the code. I do not forgive de Castro's insult. Sometime—his life or mine."

Gomez bowed stiffly. "As Your Excellency wills. I must compliment you," he grinned. "You made a good swordsman work."

Don John shrugged his shoulders with contempt. "I'm glad to have made acquaintance with his reach. It will profit me another time," was all he said.

Over the coffee an hour later, in Don John's apartments, he discussed, with his two relatives, the meeting.

"No doubt you are wondering," he said to Prince Alexander, "why he pricked me so soon after we resumed."

"On the contrary," exclaimed the Italian; "after I saw him in action, I wondered why he didn't prick you sooner."

"I am less afraid of him now," observed Don John, "than I was before five o'clock."

"Don't underestimate the enemy," suggested Farnese.

Don John leaned forward in his chair. "It's much more important, Sandro, *not* to *over*estimate him."

The young man to whom Don John spoke, long afterward, told his captains, when receiving their compliments upon a signal victory, that he owed his success in the field chiefly to the counsel given him in youth by his uncle, Don John of Austria: "Don't overestimate your enemy."

"But let me tell you a strange thing that happened, Sandro," continued Don John. "I have always had a vague impression that I must have seen de Castro before I met him in Madrid. I know now I have seen him. And that this was not the first duel but the second that we have fought.

"Do you remember my telling you about a caval-

cade that one day long ago passed a roadside group of ragged schoolboys, of whom I was one? And how one of the horsemen struck me across the cheek with a whip and I threw a stone at him and ran?

"I've remembered that man all my life with bitterness. I've thought of him—dreamed of him. I never expected to see him again but I met him this morning. It was de Castro."

"Then you," interposed Don Carlos, energetically, "threw the stone that broke his nose!"

"That I did not wait to see," continued Don John drily. "But after I had touched his cheek this morning and he came back at me, I saw, suddenly, the same enraged face I saw ten years ago. I knew it was he. For a moment it upset me. Result: a touch——"

"And a mean one—" interjected Carlos.

Don John dismissed the subject. "I think not. He was smooth-faced then—now he is bearded. That has made it harder to identify my rude cavalier. Well —to our next meeting!"

CHAPTER XXIII

DISCIPLINE

Bad news travels fast, but in a royal court news concerning royalty travels faster. Both de Castro and Don John were necessarily in seclusion for some days. In that interval, court spies of Perez laid the story of the duel before him. The minister, knowing the incident could not be kept from the King, resolved to get to his ear first with his version of what, he knew, would in the circumstances make Philip very angry.

In this manœuvre Perez was successful. Don John —always the wild and reckless brother—was loaded with most of the blame and his own nephew, de Castro, was allotted very little, and pictured as unfortunately high-spirited and unable to escape repeated affronts, concerning his father's misfortune, at the hands of Don John.

When good Don Luis Quixada brought this version from the King to Don John for him to deny or confirm, the illustrious bastard said bitingly that the minister might or might not be correct in his story, but one thing was certain: that de Castro would receive further and more serious affronts at his hands if he dared remain in the Spanish court.

The veteran soldier pleaded for a less truculent attitude; he even begged Don John to go himself to Philip. The only reply was, that since his royal brother was always so ready to believe his favorite, Perez, Don

John would not undertake to weaken his confidence in him.

Results came fast. Don Carlos was put under strict surveillance in his apartments. Prince Sandro, as an Italian relative and a guest, could not be disciplined; but de Castro was banished from court for six months —this, really, because Perez feared another outbreak of Don John's deep-seated enmity toward his nephew. Gomez and Big Lorente were thrown into prison. The surgeon pleaded that he had acted in ignorance and under duress. Don John himself was sent "to the galleys" as he termed it, i.e., he was ordered to report for service to the martinet of the Spanish navy, old Admiral Orgas.

One more heart suffered in all of this; but it was a woman's heart: and who cares aught for the suffering of a woman's heart? Carmen remained in Madrid only long enough to learn of Don John's recovery from his wound and without a word left with her household for Arcos and her beloved people.

Orgas received the crownless prince, so summarily placed in his charge, on the poop of the admiral galley and lived up to his reputation for frostiness in his formal reception of the stubborn youth—for this casual stem of the House of Austria was yet hardly more than that. Orgas had his instructions directly—that is, through Perez—from Philip. These were in effect to forget that his charge was the King's brother and put him through naval discipline unsparingly: no injunction could have pleased the Admiral better.

Don John took, without protest or whimper, what was to him cruel punishment in his routine of work. His wrongs, or what seemed such to him, rankled in his heart; but the pride of Austria's house—something of which he had an ample share—would have sus-

tained much severer punishment than he was asked to undergo in being made into a sailor.

He was rated as a gentleman of the poop, or what would now be termed a midshipman—though Don John was also made to learn all that concerned a galley, from the laying of the keel to its launching. He was assigned to quarters in the galley of Captain Augostino, a grizzled veteran of the Mediterranean, and dined at times on invitation at the Admiral's table—but greatly bored in spite of Orgas' prawns and heavy wines. He liked his superior officer, old Augostino, better than the martinet commander of the fleet.

He maintained friendly relations with the officers; but there was in his manner, pervading though not offensive, a reserve that never allowed those about him to forget who he was. One of the Admiral's restrictions galled the ambitious princeling severely. Not infrequently light galleys were sent out from the fleet base to scout for or pursue Moorish raiders. Don John in the beginning made fervent appeals to be allowed to go out with these galleys.

Orgas declared such permission would be contrary to the spirit of his orders, which included a caution that His Excellency should not be exposed to danger or capture—it being doubtless the apprehension of the always thrifty as well as always straitened Philip, that if the Moors or Turks ever got hold of his brother they would demand half the royal treasury as ransom. Don John gnashed his teeth in anger; but there was no appeal. He turned again bitterly resentful to his daily grind.

But by applying himself coldly and diligently to his unpleasant tasks, the culprit gradually extorted a secret admiration even from Orgas himself. To the surprise of the old man, however, his own advances in

cordiality toward his charge were not joyfully received. The cavalier manner of the Admiral in the beginning lingered still in the memory of Don John. He made no secret of his preference for keeping himself to himself; and since the only diversion for his spare hours was reading, he rummaged the Admiral's scanty store of naval treatises and histories and made himself master of their lore.

Four months in port, in shipbuilding, in drilling sailors, and requisitioning supplies, thus passed more rapidly than John would have believed possible—when there came a flare-up.

Don Carlos, free once more from the restraint of his apartments, was celebrating in ways, not always seemly, his release from durance.

Whatever the faults and misfortunes of Don Carlos, heir to the Spanish throne, his affection for his uncle, Don John, was never impaired. Don Carlos was the older by two years, but he looked to the younger relative as a friend who was, frankly, his mental superior.

One day a messenger appeared at Don John's galley with a note for him. It was from Don Carlos. He wrote that he and Sandro were in town, had arranged a party for the evening at the palace assigned to them for their stay, and begged his uncle by the love he bore them both, not to fail to join them. Adding that as he, Don John, had been the cause of Don Carlos's having been deprived for so long of the street life of the capital, it was fitting he should appear to felicitate his devoted nephew on release from a drab existence during four long months.

Don John went in person to the Admiral to ask for twelve hours' shore leave. Upon learning the reason for the request, Orgas bluntly refused it. Don John bowed himself out without a sign of displeasure

and returning to his own galley wrote a brief note to Don Carlos accepting his invitation and asking him to send out a yawl secretly at ten o'clock that night to take him ashore. This he despatched by the waiting messenger.

At the appointed hour, Don John, in uniform, and fully armed, stepped into the yawl and was rowed ashore.

Don Carlos and his guest, Prince Sandro, with their retinues, guests and servants, had been lodged by the mayor in spacious quarters. The astute majordomo of the heir-apparent, knowing the tastes of his young master, had, on his own account and aided in his selections by a noted local procurer, assembled for the diversion of the Princes the dark flower of Catalonian femininity. When Don John was announced, the dancing, drinking and feasting were well under way and his two noble cousins were gay indeed.

Apart from a small coterie of Don Carlos' court friends the company was strange to Don John. Nor did the unconventional behavior of the frail Catalonians appeal to him as such demonstrations once did. This surprised Don John himself—something was lost to him even though he did not realize precisely what.

Perhaps in the penumbra of his memory there lingered the faint image of another presence, a vision of chaste gray eyes that could stir his heart with a different appeal. At all events, he found it an effort to fall into the spirit of the noisy evening; to support tired charmers who insisted on sitting in his lap and laying strongly perfumed heads of hair confidingly on his shoulder—and two such at a time seemed unduly heavy. And to drink strong wines when not thirsty became a bore. Was it really, he began to ask him-

self, worth the trouble he had been forced to take to come?

Don Carlos had reached that comfortable mental state in which he was enjoying himself and was past anxieties concerning the enjoyment of his guests: they were at liberty to have as good a time as he was having; if they failed, it was no longer concern of his. Sandro, clearer-headed and keener-witted, perceived that his usually fiery uncle was distrait and rallied him on his blasé manner. Brushing the anxious-to-please females aside, Don John fell into conversation with Sandro, asking questions about things at court and how his, Sandro's mother, Margaret of Austria, was getting on in the low countries; how the threat of Morisco trouble was regarded at court; and whether it was true that the plague had broken out in Saragossa and Arcos.

"But have you heard about de Castro?" asked Sandro, suddenly alert.

Don John eyed him coldly. "What about de Castro?"

"Plenty. I'd forgotten you've been away so long. After de Castro lost his banker——"

"His banker?"

"When you went into the navy. He picked on a new one and who do you suppose *he* was? None other than the King's treasurer. De Castro enlisted three other adventurous gentlemen and waylaid a royal convoy of American gold coming from Seville to Madrid. They attacked the King's men in a mountain pass, were beaten off by the guards, de Castro was captured, condemned to the galleys, escaped on the way down here and got away to France."

Don John listened grimly. "He should be at home there—his father was! I hope nothing happens to the poor fellow till I can meet him again!"

At this moment a commotion was heard in the outer hall.

Uninvited guests had made their appearance. The majordomo and his servants were trying to prevent their entrance, but force had triumphed over diplomacy and greatly embarrassed, the majordomo walked hastily over to Sandro and Don John to report that a guard from Don John's galley had entered the hall bearing an urgent summons for speech with Don John.

Accompanied by Sandro, who was trying to pacify him, Don John, very angry, and with everybody looking, strode across the ballroom and out into the hall. Four men under Augostino, captain of his galley, stood at attention when the Prince entered the hall. He curtly demanded of Augostino his errand.

"Your Excellency," said the old man respectfully, "the orders of the Admiral are that you return to the galley."

"When?"

"At once, Your Excellency."

"And if I refuse?"

"Your Excellency will be under arrest."

"Say to the Admiral, I will report to him to-morrow morning," returned Don John curtly.

The Captain was deferential, but firm. "We are required explicitly by our orders to bring Your Excellency to your quarters with us," insisted the Captain.

"Go back and report to Admiral Orgas that I refuse to come."

By this time the ballroom was pretty well emptied and the spacious hall well filled by curious and excited guests who looked with wide-open eyes on the scene and listened, hushed, to the snapping words of the Prince and the unmoved insistence of the captain of the guard.

"Your Excellency," returned Augostino, "my further orders are that if you refuse to come, you are to be placed under arrest and brought back."

Only these words, coupled with the mood in which they found Don John, were needed to inflame him to anger. He whipped out his sword. "See whether you and your men are equal to your orders," he exclaimed hotly. "Defend yourself!"

Challenged thus rudely before an array of roysterers who now began to jeer him, the stout-hearted Augostino flashed his own sword. Don John, purple with anger, took a threatening step forward.

Instead of responding on guard, the veteran changed his whole attitude, stept quickly back and slipped his blade sharply into its scabbard.

"Draw, Captain, draw! You are here to take me—obey your orders!" exclaimed Don John infuriated.

For answer, the old man, bending slightly forward, pulled off his leathern helmet. As he did so, his thin hair fell in disorder over his eyes. Looking at Don John and resting his hand on the hilt of his sheathed cutlass, he spoke calmly. "Your Excellency, I know very well that I am no match for you with steel. Yet not for that do I sheathe my cutlass. I served your father in Flanders. I spilt blood for him at Mühlberg." With his left hand, Augostino drew his gray hair away from the scar of an old saber cut that reached almost from the front to the back of his head. "It is not for me"—he spoke proudly—"to draw against the son of my dead Emperor—slay if you will."

An instant passed before Don John could collect himself. A breathless moment awaited his reply. Then a clash of steel broke the silence. Don John, lifting his own sword, had driven it back into its scabbard.

"Captain!" He saluted Augostino. "Lead the way."

CHAPTER XXIV

SHOCK

Ground to the dust in humiliation, disdainful of expostulations and penalties, Don John yet took in silence the summary punishment meted out by Orgas. Ordered confined to his cabin, he turned for distraction to his books. Even these refused to quiet his restless mind. Struggling with them for distraction in his torment he found intruding upon his thoughts with growing violence, visions of that daring young girl who, reckless of consequence, had pawned her greatest treasure—her reputation—to warn him of danger. Carmen! Day after day, the mute eyes and resolute lips of the delicate Princess blurred the printed page before him. One night, sitting in silence by his solitary light, he flung away his book, clenched his hands in his hair and confessed to himself passionately that he was inflamed with a deep love for her.

Springing to his feet, frowning at times, angry with himself and tantalized by the newly-awakened thoughts, he walked the floor. When he checked himself it was only to call her name aloud to the heavy walls of his cabin; the mere sound of that name rolling again and again loudly and softly through his dry lips brought a new thrill. Overcome at last by his emotion he dragged writing material from his desk and sitting down spent the rest of the night over a letter to her, telling her as best he could of a love he could no longer restrain.

"Among all at court that I have known, Carmen, you alone of those whom I felt should be, have been always kind to me; and you alone have seemed high and noble to me while my days and nights were being wasted—you know how! How dare I then avow that I love you—you who are so far above all I can ever possibly deserve. Yet it is this that fills my heart and I *must* tell you, whatever your answer. Without a name, without a throne, even unworthy of you, Carmen, how dare I urge a suit for your hand? Yet I must lay my heart before you because you have done so much and risked so much for a nameless adventurer. I am under punishment for a breach of discipline. But my worst punishment is that I cannot see you to plead, myself, all and more than I am writing. Shall I hear from you? Until I do I shall be in torture. Tell me at least that you forgive my presumption.

DON JOHN."

He enclosed the letter under seal within a note to Don Luis at court, asking that Diego or Gaspar ride post with the letter to Arcos and deliver it to the Princess Carmen in person, not waiting for an answer; but to be sure that he be advised by Don Luis as to its safe delivery.

With all of this done, Don John threw himself on his narrow bed; daylight was peering through his port-hole.

If a state that Don John had averred in his letter to Carmen was mental torture, the suspense that followed his despatch of the missive really was torture to his turbulent spirit. Post-riding was slow, even to court—to Arcos more dangerous and slower still. The first news, after a seemingly interminable period, came in a letter from Don Luis, advising Don John that the letter to Carmen had been forwarded with Diego as postman.

Don Luis wrote only to say that Diego had returned after delivering the letter to the Princess Carmen in person. He having been instructed not to wait for an answer, had left Arcos at once—the more hurriedly, wrote Don Luis, since the city was infested with the plague.

The day after the receipt of this word came the order of Orgas releasing his fractious subordinate from his imprisonment—so, at least, Don John termed it. His freedom was welcome. But the same day there came from Don Luis by the hand of Diego riding at all speed from Madrid a further message. It was brought to the galley by Diego himself. Don John on the quarter-deck saw the small boat approaching. He recognized Diego at a distance and greeted him joyously.

Diego, bareheaded, approached his happy master, with a strange expression, muttering thanks for Don John's kindly greeting as he bowed low and handed to him the letter he bore. It was not from Carmen—but bore the inscription of Don Luis. That was the first disappointment. He tore the letter open. It told him in as few words as could convey the shocking news that the Princess Carmen had been stricken with the plague.

Hardly had Don John read the fateful message when a second messenger, Gaspar, was seen in the skiff of a boatman approaching the galley. He brought only a message from Don Luis, conveyed in all haste by the trembling lips of old Gaspar. He was bidden to tell his master that the Princess Carmen lay in her palace at Arcos, dead of the plague.

Dazed, in that bitter moment, Don John laid both his hands on Gaspar's bent shoulders to listen again to his tragic words—the words that struck the death knell of his passionate hope and newly awakened happiness.

In cold tone and manner, strangely unlike what they both knew so well to be his own, he mechanically thanked the two faithful messengers, plainly exhausted by their gruelling rides, ordered their wants looked after and turning on his heel, returned to his cabin and locked its door behind him.

During the day he remained in seclusion, declining food or service. Sometime after daybreak, he opened his cabin door, ordered out a boat and was rowed to the Admiral's galley. Orgas in his bed received him, heard his request for leave and the explanation of it, expressed strongly his disapproval, but after reflection said he should not feel justified in refusing it and gave his consent, predicated on the further consent of the King.

An ancient custom of the realm demanded that upon the passing of a member of the royal family, one of the blood must in person inspect the remains and certify to the death. Perez, always an enemy of Don John, whom he blamed as being the cause of his nephew's downfall, saw in the tragedy at Arcos a chance to do an ill turn to the King's nameless brother. He broached to Philip the idea of suggesting to Don John that he go to Arcos to certify to the death of the Princess Carmen. And having secured from His Majesty an unconsidered assent to his scheme, he put it in motion without loss of time. Should Don John accept the commission he would in all likelihood perish in the stricken city; should he refuse he would be branded as a coward —either issue would be gratifying to the arch plotter of an intriguing court.

The messenger promptly despatched to Barcelona by Perez on receiving the royal assent, reached Don John shortly after the interview with Orgas. Far from considering the commission an unwelcome challenge, the

headstrong Prince exulted in it. Not unmindful, perhaps, of the motive of the minister, of whose enmity he was well aware, in placing on his shoulders the dangerous mission, Don John, having meant to go to his dead love, permission or no permission, rejoiced in the way made clear. With as little of formal etiquette and as much of contempt for the minister as he could show, John sent only a curt verbal message back by the courier to Perez. "Tell the minister," he said coldly, "that anticipating my brother's consent, I was already on my way to Arcos."

With every possible arrangement made for speed, and a light rider hurried on to provide relays of horseflesh at available points for hard riding, Don John went ashore. Gaspar and Diego rode in the boat with him.

On the dock, Don John spoke to his old servitors. The two looked bewildered as their master gave them his thanks for their faithful services, filled their hands with gold and bade them return to Don Luis.

"But Your Excellency," stammered Diego, speaking with hat in one hand and the Prince's gold lying in the open palm of the other, "you are riding to Arcos?"

"Yes; and into Arcos."

"Surely not unattended," protested the old soldier.

"I could not ask any man to ride into Arcos with me. You know, Diego, better than another—Arcos is a city of the dead."

"But, Your Highness," persisted the infirm veteran, "surely you will not deny me the privilege and duty of attending you——"

"Nor me, Your Excellency." Gaspar bowed very low.

"—wherever you go—into danger most of all, Your

Highness!" appealed Diego. Pathos expressed itself in every lineament of his features.

Despite his benumbing grief, Don John was moved by the manifest devotion. "Diego," he said calmly, "I would ask no man to accompany me on this errand. It is not likely that anyone who undertakes it will ever return. To me, this means little. To you—" he addressed both his listeners, "it should mean much. Why put your lives in peril? Why expose yourselves without need to almost certain death?"

"Where the master is," replied Diego simply, "there, too, should be his servant."

"You are bound to go?" Something in the simple devotion of his followers softened the rigor of the prince.

"We are, Your Excellency," answered the two.

"Then in God's name, make ready!"

CHAPTER XXV

BLACK DEATH

NIGHT was falling when Don John and a small retinue drew up before the gates of Arcos. From Madrid, a notary and a Franciscan friar attended by two men-at-arms had joined the Prince. The hurried journey had been a hard one in all senses. For hours as the party approached the stricken city they had encountered those of the fleeing populace who had not earlier been able to make their escape from it.

All the horrors imagined of famine and of war presented themselves in the dolorous spectacle along the highway. Men, women and children, on foot, on mule and on horse, and in all manner of conveyance, from wagon to push-cart, were fleeing with their domestic animals and belongings the city of death.

But whatever their poverty or affluence, all faces in the flight were alike haggard with exhaustion and fear. Wan and hungry children, their dust-laden cheeks furrowed from long weeping, looked pathetically up at Don John as he galloped past. Old men and old women loaded with the scanty household goods; mothers, travel-soiled and weary, their sunken eyes destitute even of hope, struggled along on foot, babes in their arms and crying children clinging to their skirts. The weak, overcome, lay along the roadside, some crying out in rage, some in agony, some dying without word or complaint while the strong, abandon-

ing father, brother, mother, sister or offspring, pressed relentlessly on.

Again and again, Don John paused and dismounted to succor those who stretched out appealing arms. He divided food and wine with one after another of the sufferers till his followers respectfully protested he would completely empty their pouches and skins before the return journey was even begun; and he was forced to press ahead on the lane of horrors, stony-faced and deaf to its racking distresses.

At moments the party would dash past a mother, fallen at a turn in the road, lying the throes of death, a baby tugging at her empty breast. Again it was a man, crazed, who lifted his dying frame to call with agonising screams on God for help. A huge muleteer, drunk and hysterical, lying in the dust of the roadway, yelled snatches of ribald song and laughed diabolically in his frenzy as frightened refugees turned away their faces and hurried past him.

Wearied in mind and body, even Diego and Gaspar, veterans of the bloody fields of the Emperor, watched Don John with amazement as he held without murmur to his purpose, unshaken by what he saw, and kept his way toward the city of the dead.

Reaching the Guadarrama gate of the stricken city —no longer guarded, but flung wide open for the flight of the refugees, Don John halted his few followers.

Accompanied by the notary, the friar, and with Diego as guide, he passed through the gate. Diego after some search managed to find an abandoned torch and with him Don John walked forward, the notary and Friar following.

The streets were deserted save for those robed and hooded carriers who with loud and dolorous summons

called on the living to bring out the dead; or for some slinking prowler of the night, bent on snatching from the jaws of death such plunder as he might, even at the cost of his life. A distracted man, his arms uplifted, rushed past Don John and his men, calling to heaven in blood-curdling shrieks to save him. In the square before the great palace blazed a huge pyre, fed by half-mad men and women who sought to drive away death by fire. In a short street leading into the square, the windows of one house were ablaze with lights. From within came the noise of music and feasting where those desperate, who purposed to drown fear and meet death defiantly, had gathered to die in a burst of revelry.

Through all of this, Don John and his retainers made their way to the palace entrance. The gates were open and unguarded—open, too, were the bronze doors leading into the great hall; no lights were anywhere visible. Taking the torch from Diego, Don John, followed by the notary and the Friar, led the way up the broad staircase, seeking Carmen's apartments.

A glimpse through an open door of a frightened maid-servant, pausing, candle in hand, as she perceived strange men, was the first sight of life they encountered. Don John, calling to her, explained himself and his errand. The woman, without speaking, led the way through the open doors of the suite to a closed door; and, standing outside, threw the door open and without a word pointed to a chamber lighted only in the center by a circle of candles.

Within this room into which Don John now threw the rays of the torch, the dead Princess lay in her coffin. From a nearby couch a startled woman rose to her feet as she saw the intruders. Holding aloft the torch, Don John recognized her as one of Carmen's

ladies-in-waiting. It was she who had come to him with her mistress on the night of the duel.

She knew Don John at once, and with the first words of his greeting burst into tears. He whispered to her a little appeal for courage, at this moment when he needed all he could summon of his own. While he listened, half-distraught, to her brief, tragic story, his eyes fixed on the candles about the head of her to whom he had committed, too late, all of his hopes of earthly happiness. He was told how Carmen had received his letter with joy and that her answer lay now in her hand unfinished—just as it was at the moment she was stricken. She told him how those about Carmen had pleaded with her to flee for safety when the plague appeared. How the Princess had told those who pleaded that they themselves were free to go—her duty was among her people.

The words seemed to come to him through a fog of hearing. Passing the torch to Diego, he crossed the room to where the Princess lay.

Her face was covered by a linen kerchief. Her right hand lay across her breast; clasped within it, folded, she held his letter to her, and her answer. He bent over her, kissed her hand tenderly, drew from it the two letters and placed them within his doublet. Hesitating for a moment, he took in his hands the two upper corners of the kerchief and drew it slowly away from the features he had known so long and, too late, loved so well.

Diego, torch in hand at his side, felt the sudden start of his master, as he looked on what but yesterday had been the beauty and glory of young womanhood.

The Friar had tiptoed, trembling, to his side. He, too, saw under the flickering light of the torch the

havoc wrought on so late a creature of purity and innocence, struck down by the Black Plague. And gazing fear-stricken for but an instant, the unfortunate Friar sank to the floor, himself in the grip of the deadly malady.

Don John stood a moment motionless; then drawing the white cloth over the face as if it had been profanation to expose it, he knelt beside his dead love and buried his face in his hands.

He rose presently and turned to Diego; but his face, naturally fresh and handsome, was drawn and wrinkled; it was the face of one young grown suddenly old. He bent over the fallen Friar, who in his agony begged John to leave him and flee. A man-servant of the palace had come into the room in answer to a summons from the lady-in-waiting. Don John joined them. They told him, in answer to his question, that all had been prepared for the burial in the chapel and had waited only on his arrival. Bidding the servant summon his fellows, and await his return, Don John took the Friar up from the floor in his arms and carried him to the palace portal; there he hailed two passing brothers of the Misericordia, carriers of the dead, who promised to take the fated man to his monastery.

Again begging Don John to flee, the dying Friar gave him the blessing the Prince asked for kneeling; and as he was borne away, Don John returned to the upper room of the palace. Three old men had responded to their call of duty. With but a few years at most to expect of life, these servitors had remained faithful. Aided by and followed by Don John, bearing the torch, and by the weeping lady, they conveyed their dead mistress down the long flight of stairs to the chapel. A marble slab just before the

altar rail had been removed and a grave opened. Into this was lowered the slip of a girl—last of the line of the house of Arcos. And the nameless son of the great house of Austria watched beside her final resting place.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE DINNER THAT FAILED

"Dear, dear John! I am the happiest girl in the whole world!

"Why have you doubted—doubted? Must I have told *you* that I loved you, before you told *me* what I have longed and longed to hear? No name, do you say? No name? What has love to do with a *name?* You are my John—I, your Carmen. I believe I should love you just as much (don't betray me, John!) were you a muleteer of the highway—instead of a grandee of Spain.

"Ah, dear one; I know you better than you know yourself. No name? You shall win a name. It shall be greater than the name of any of your blood—and you *will* let a foolish little girl of Arcos wear it with you? John! I am so happy I am crying!"

The unfinished letter from Carmen lay in the hand of Don John. Read now with stinging eyes, it had lain in his bosom during all of the long, gruelling ride back to Barcelona. He could not summon courage to look at it until he had locked himself in his galley cabin.

For days together he denied himself to everyone. His Admiral grew uneasy. Any harm that befell Don John would bring condign punishment, possibly on the right man, possibly on the wrong man, but certainly on *some* man. The Admiral well knew how long the arm of royalty could be stretched when reaching for a

scapegoat. Orgas, therefore, fearing a possible illness, sent a surgeon to investigate his difficult charge —Don John refused to see him. His comrades in the fleet, who loved him—indeed, there was never a time in the life of Don John of Austria when those about him did *not* love him—his comrades tried courageously to penetrate his aloofness—they could not.

Orgas thereupon suggested to the young blades under him the time-honored expedient of restoring a young man, once gay, to his natural bent by administering fresh doses of gaiety. Not adverse themselves to the prescription, his companions took it up.

The recluse Prince had resumed his daily walk on the galley coursie, but early overtures to him on the subject of cultivating anew the lighter side of life were coldly received. His friends, however, persevered in the belief that all men are frail and that their weak side can, with persistence, be reached.

Rebuffed in their straightforward endeavors to drag Don John out, the genial conspirators employed a ruse. Orgas told them confidentially that word had now come from Perez and that a date would soon be named for Don John's release from naval duty. This hint afforded the plotters all they desired in the way of opportunity. By the time Don John had been officially notified that an early day would be set for his release from discipline, his comrades had enlisted Don Carlos and Sandro in their plot. And a committee waited on Don John and asked that he would allow his associate officers to honor him with a little dinner ashore on an evening before leaving the fleet as an evidence of their collective esteem.

It was impossible to do less than accept this tribute of affection, for Don John felt only affectionate regard for those about him. But the news that he was to leave

the navy made no more impression on him than any other news since his return from Arcos.

In the hands of a gay and chivalrous escort he was brought ashore, with all naval honors. The first surprise came to him when he was conveyed with due ceremony to the house of the mayor, where he found Don Carlos and Sandro awaiting him. The house had again been turned over to them for their stay and their servants were in charge. This lively entertainment promised well, and the greetings of his nephews cheered the numbed sensibilities of the guest of honor.

All went pleasantly until toward the close of the dinner a burst of music was heard in the great hall, the doors of the dining salon were flung open and in capered a company of masked coryphees and fairies. With them came a troup of singers, likewise masked and in grotesque costume. This surprise was signalised by more animation than drapery; and following, to the strains of lively music, there poured into the room a bevy of entertainers characterized by a scantiness of attire calculated to startle the hardiest among the spectators. Indeed, the committee on entertainment had scoured the city for feminine frailty and as their assembled talent burst into the dining hall, the members sat back in their chairs, satisfied with the result of their endeavor.

Don John, at the moment of this radical intermezzo, was in converse with Sandro, sitting at his left. The bold incursions of the Turks and their Moorish allies along the Spanish coast were being discussed and to Sandro, Don John was setting forth freely his views of the inefficiency of the Spanish defense. So heated was his low utterance that at first he failed to notice what was going on. But Sandro's Italian eyes had already begun to wander from the theme of war.

Don John, looking up, perceived what had been introduced to supplement the dinner in his honor. His face fell. As he glanced about the room, the blacker grew his features. With resentment flashing from his eyes and an oath on his lips he sprang to his feet, dragging half the settings from the table in his sudden anger. He stood an instant, a picture of wrath—long enough at least for those about to realize their offense. Then his eyes with tingling contempt fixed on the still capering Thalians. He snatched a purse from his girdle, flung it unceremoniously at their feet and, turning, strode precipitately from the room.

CHAPTER XXVII

A BRUSH WITH ALUCH

"Most Gracious Brother:

"I have received from the hand of my Admiral your welcome words of release from my service in the base fleet here, and your permission upon leaving Barcelona to return to court. For all of this I desire to express sincere gratitude. And in so doing, may I add a respectful petition which I earnestly hope Your Majesty will deign to grant.

"My ill-starred fortunes seem not to prosper on land. Monotonous as the fleet service here has been, it has awakened in me a great love for the sea. May I not, by Your Majesty's favor, remain in your navy and serve Your Majesty in that line of defense against the turbulent Moor and the unspeakable Turk? I feel strongly and deeply that if I can reflect any credit on Your Majesty's reign, it must be in service on the sea. I am earnestly interested both in ships and in men, and to say truth, not in much else.

"Should Your Majesty be so gracious as to grant my humble petition, pray let me serve under Your Majesty's faithful servant, Admiral Requesens, now newly-made, I hear. He knows me and my ambitions well. And I pledge my honor that if my request be granted I shall never give Your Majesty cause to regret your favor.

"Don John of Austria."

Writing slowly in his cabin, the dejected Prince had spent much of the remainder of the night composing this petition to his brother. The hours and days that followed its despatch passed with leaden feet until a royal messenger set foot on the galley with a long letter filled with advice from Philip and written in his own hand, granting his brother's wish. Nothing remained but to reply in grateful terms to His Majesty, write the good news to Don Luis, pack his simple belongings and await Orgas' order confirming his transfer to Requesens' command.

The day that he sat honorably down at the table of Admiral Requesens in welcome to his fleet for coast defense, Don John, long referred to as the happiest in a naval career too brief, yet one destined to rank as one of the most memorable in man's struggle for the mastery of the sea.

Changed from the gay young blade of the night parties of Madrid into a stern young Spanish naval officer, Don John's only interests were in learning everything possible about every type of war vessel afloat at that period—whether ship, frigate, two-masted brig, brigantine, galley or three-masted galleass. Every sheet, every sail, every oar, every galley bench, every gun—big or little—that made up the armament of the greatest naval power, save one, in the world of 1570—John made himself acquainted with. And not only with ships, but likewise with men, from the blooded officer of the poop to the desperate slave in the galley. Requesens acquainted him with the history and the strategy, tactics and theories then favored in naval warfare. Don John applied them to the current conditions on the Mediterranean.

He thus became an adept in the guerrilla tactics that characterized the Moorish piracy with which the Medi-

terranean was infested from Sicily to Gibraltar. A dark-skinned sea-marauder would lurk in a bay or creek along the Spanish coast, swoop down on a trading vessel and carry off the crew to Barbary as slaves. A bolder Moor, his craft disguised as a fisher boat, lying over-night in hiding, would descend in early morning on the fields of the Sicilian coast, steal the laborers out of the vineyards and expose them for sale in the slave markets of Algiers.

No exploit was too bold for these hardy raiders, no degree of cruelty too ferocious for their unhappy victims to suffer. The northern littoral of the western Mediterranean was dotted with strong watch-towers to warn villagers of sudden Moorish raiders, and all the Christian islands were thus guarded. The watch-towers of Sicily were set within sight of one another around the whole Island—yet the Barbary corsairs continued to carry off the luckless inhabitants. Equaling the Turk in cold-blooded ferocity, the Algerine, close to his home base and keen in his quest for booty and slaves, drove the Spaniards and Italians, by pillaging and cruelty, to the verge of desperation.

In this merciless warfare Don John received his baptism as a sea-fighter. Requesens liked the boy, as he called him, immensely, and went to the limit of authority in giving the young prince as much liberty in minor warlike operations as he dared.

At twenty, Don John was in command of a light Spanish galley—the Lizard—chosen from the fleet for its speed, with Sandro under him. Quite as important in the eyes of the young commander as his vessel —of which he knew every stick and timber—was its complement of galley slaves.

During the first year of his independent command, he had carefully studied and sifted out a crew thor-

oughly loyal to him. While he treated them sternly, he treated them humanly in a day when the galley slave was regarded the most wretched and degraded human being in the world. There were three classes of these unfortunates—all clad in woolen frocks, usually red, and wearing red caps. First there were the Turkish, Moorish and negro captives; then Spanish convicts, and lastly ex-convicts—"volunteers" they were called—convicts who had served their time and who through love of adventure or an advance of ship's money for a spree, would sell their liberty for a year at a time and return to their bondage.

From among worthies such as these—rogues, thieves, dicers, highwaymen, assassins, fallen gentlemen and prisoners of war—Don John picked his crew. And by painstaking selection and weeding out, he had assembled a band of adventurers chosen for physical strength, a spirit of endurance and reckless daring, who deemed it an honor to serve in the Lizard.

Hard work, hard fare, hard weather, hard knocks and the bullstring were their lot. But there was a great difference in commanders; and as a galley, the Lizard rated well among these castaways. With the exception of a handful of extremely hardy Moors, the galley slaves of the Lizard were convicts and "volunteers." These latter, as a special privilege, were allowed by Don John, after their heads and chins had been shaved, to wear piratical mustachios of which they were inordinately proud.

The Lizard carried three guns, two being at the bow and each throwing a fifteen-pound ball. Amidships, Don John had rigged a German traversing gun, much heavier; it threw a thirty-pound ball. This was his favorite and not infrequently he fired it himself, that his gunners might know he could beat them at

their own game. And this formidable piece was known on the galley as the Black Cat.

The Lizard carried a complement of forty soldiers, drilled by Diego and Gaspar till their tongues hung out. They cursed them, reviled them and put them through their paces as they themselves had been put through in Flanders. The petty officers of the galley were chosen preferably from the slave gang so that the ambitious of these had always before them the prize of promotion if they should earn it. Don John's eight trumpeters would blow their heads off for him.

With this equipment, the veteran Diego as boatswain, and his seasoned slaves at the oars, Don John spent months in threading the coves and creeks of the Spanish and Sicilian coasts. He knew better the minute topography of his cruising territory than the Spanish cartographers knew it: and having thus made ready, the dilettante of the Madrid salons stripped his craft for action and put to sea.

The Lizard, while not too long to manœuvre in creeks and coves, was narrow of beam. In rough weather it was a terror as a roller; but for speed it was the pick of Requesens' galleys, and speed was what its captain wanted. The hull was usually painted a dull gray, and from its trick of darting out of concealment on the enemy, its name was deemed appropriate.

A third characteristic signalized its resemblance to another kind of lizard. No matter in what attire it left port, it was pretty sure to come back in another.

In a day when brilliant display was the fashion in naval dress, Don John chose for his vessel dull disguise and camouflage. The Lizard was provided with brown canvas to drape the side exposed to the sea when lying in wait. Thus against a barren or rocky

shore when no other concealment was available, the galley, draped in a brown resembling rock, could lie, with masts shipped until the unsuspecting enemy should come within range of the Cat, amidships. If the shore were wooded and green, small trees and shrubs were hastily cut, the galley dressed, and the first intimation of danger given to the unsuspecting enemy, would appear when a small section of the forest moved down on him with terrifying celerity. In these and similar disguises the Lizard would return to its base with a prize.

Its exploits thus became the dread of the Algerine and a thorn in the side of the more distant, but arrogant, Turk.

The law of the Spanish sea was Draconian and on the Lizard its rigor was pretty strictly enforced: it was an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth—the exceptions were rare.

During the early months of Don John's cruising, one conspicuously bold Algerian pirate had ravaged with impunity the coast of Sicily and captured an alarming number of Christian trading vessels. He was known to be a renegade—a former Calabrian fisherman. Captured by Dragut, the famous corsair, this Calabrian, variously named, but always responding to the name of Aluch, had, after some years at the oar, turned Moslem and corsair himself. An offensive scalp disease gave him the nickname of "Scaldhead." Knowing well the coasts of Calabria and Sicily, he had become a local scourge to the inhabitants. He was fertile in resource, crafty, ingenious in manœuvre and merciless to his prisoners. Such was the worthy who had thus far evaded all attempts at capture.

Appeals from Sicilian traders for help began to reach Don John through his Admiral. Requesens finally

gave the Prince leave to attempt the troublesome pirate's capture, and Don John set out in the Lizard for Sicily.

Instead of appearing as a deliverer and receiving a semi-royal welcome, he approached the Island disguised as a Turkish man-raider, dressed in an opulence of red and white. The appearance of this formidable spectre spread from watch-tower to watch-tower along the coast. Defense forces were hastily rallied and the worst was apprehended by the panic-stricken people.

After a demonstration lasting long enough to allow the Island forces to prepare, the bow guns of the Lizard belched forth a sheet of flame, followed by an occasional report from the deeper-throated German gun, which echoed ominously through the hills and hollows of the coast.

An experienced observer of the bombardment might have noted that the marksmanship of the pseudo-Turk was bad; and that after a few balls had kicked up the dust in the hills or chipped into the face of the coast rocks, the guns were making more noise and smoke than anything else—in a word, shooting a good many blanks.

At any rate, after some further threatening manœuvres, the pseudo-Turk drew away as if awaiting a more favorable opportunity to land an attacking force.

Don John had acted on the theory that Aluch had spies on the Island who kept him advised of happenings and meant that word should reach him of the appearance of a Turkish galley in Sicilian waters—for Aluch hovered continually along the Calabrian coast.

Standing thus on and off for a fortnight, the Lizard, after a foggy night spent in a cove near Palermo,

emerged just before daylight for its usual patrol and stood slowly out to sea.

Following regular discipline which required fighting men to be at quarters the moment the boatswain's whistle sounded for the oars, the soldiers, chilly and sleepy, crouched in groups along the deck. There was not a breath of wind and a heavy fog hung over the Tyrrhenian coast of the Island. Don John, who by preference rose early, was eating his breakfast when the watch cried out. The next moment an Algerine galley loomed up out of the fog, dead ahead.

Don John sprang to the deck, saw the situation, and ordered full speed ahead. Both crews were taken completely by surprise. The Algerine captain perceiving a Turkish galley, thought first only of avoiding a collision. He cursed the stupidity of the Lizard and tried to escape its onrush. To his consternation he then saw, as he shouted his orders, that the Star and Crescent ensign had come down. Don John was running up the Spanish colors and the pirate saw bearing swiftly down on him a war galley with its Spanish fighting men at quarters. Before he could collect his senses the forcastle guns of the Lizard belched a salvo at him: he realized that he was trapped.

But an extremely resourceful renegado—not a whit behind his adversary in tactics—piloted the corsair craft.

As the two vessels met, the Lizard struck a glancing blow on the pirate's quarter. It shook his timbers and sheared away some of his oars but he now had the advantage of being headed for escape while the Lizard was compelled to bear sharply to the right and turn to give chase. This afforded the Algerine a start and he improved his chance to send a ball from his swivel-gun into the Lizard.

Whether by luck or an excellent aim, the ball carried away the Spaniard's mast. Down came the royal colors and a ferocious yell went up from the pirate galley. None the less did the Algerine lash the slaves at the oars for speed to make good his attempt to get away.

While the Lizard headed after him, he hoisted his mainsail. But there was not a cupful of wind and the fog did not promise any. The race was between rival oars and the Spaniards cheered on their slaves to a supreme effort. A stern chase is proverbially a long one. But with the Lizard headed straight for the pirate, hope was renewed of overtaking him.

CHAPTER XXVIII

PEDRO THE FOX

"Shall I give 'em the bullstring?" shouted Diego to his captain. He wanted permission to lash the wretches straining at the oars—something to which he knew Don John was usually averse; but the veteran, infected by the spirit of the chase, was excited.

As the old circus horse, dragging a junk dealer's cart wearily along the shabby street, hears the music of a band and, roused by stirring memories of happier days, lifts head, tail and dashes ahead, to the consternation of the aged driver—so Diego responded to the smell of powder and conflict.

"Shall I give 'em the string? he yelled again. Don John's eyes were glued on the fleeing Algerine on whom he believed he was slowly gaining.

"Chuck your bullstring!" he commanded. "Double wine and double biscuit three days for them, if they catch him!" With the same breath he shouted orders to the helmsman to sheer to port and he ran down the gangway to the German gun. As the Lizard responded, he depressed the gun as much as he could and sighting the big fellow sent a shot at the pirate stern.

The ball tore into the vessel below the poop, damaged the steering gear, and passed through the water line. The Spaniards yelled. Don John ran back to his post. "A week's wine and biscuit, if they catch him!" he cried to Diego. "Give 'em all you've got!"

No further speed was sacrificed to gunfire. Nothing

was heard aboard the Lizard but the hungry yells of the fighting men, wild to board the enemy, the shouting of orders and the rough panting of the galley slaves as they strained with bursting veins at the oars.

The Algerine, apparently hopeless of escape, drew across the Lizard's bow far enough to allow him to train his swivel gun, and he sent a shot quartering at it. Again he was lucky, if no credit be given to his marksmanship, for the ball dismounted the German gun, killed two Spaniards and knocked over an entire bench of galley slaves.

But the pursuer's speed could not be overcome. Relentlessly it lessened the distance separating it from its quarry and the pirate, at bay, showed his teeth and made ready for boarding. Once more, his swivel-gun belched out a ball. It cut down a trio of soldiers on the Lizard's forecastle deck and plunged into the sea.

The Spaniard was already a little better than abeam. There was just room for the manœuvre and Don John, putting the helm hard a-starboard, brought the forecastle guns to bear and fired both at the pirate's quarter.

Gaspar had the forward guns. He sent both balls into the pirate's deck and knocked down a dozen men crowding the rail. A cloud of Moorish arrows and a chorus of Moorish screams answered the Lizard's broadside, but in no wise checked her pursuit. The Spaniards were armed with muskets, but they had learned from bitter penalties following other fights, not to fire a gun until the orders came.

Against the counsel of the older commanders in the royal service, Don John had wholly discarded the bow as a weapon and armed his men with the Brown Bess of the sixteenth century, the Italian pistol, the French cutlass, and the Spanish poniard. His tactics were al-

ways the same: to ram the enemy, board, and finish with the knife; or, if a too-confident foe boarded the Lizard, to defend with the knife and the axe. In the hands of a powerful man, the Spanish axe at close quarters was a terrible weapon; and under the same conditions, the bow was useless. Everything in Don John's tactics depended on getting within arm's length of the enemy before enemy arrows could cripple his fighting men.

It seemed hardly another moment before the iron prow of the Lizard crashed into the pirate's quarter. Men hidden under the Spanish bulwarks with the grappling irons, shot the hooks over the rail. Musketeers sent volley after volley into the massed pirates. Screeches and yells, mingling with the salvos of musketry; oaths and cheers, swelled into a pandemonium. Half a dozen pioneers—men of tremendous stature and strength, in light armor, sprang upon the crowded bulwarks of the Algerine and lashed with axes into the archers to clear the way for boarders; and these, slipping across the rail like ferrets, grappled the Algerines with the dagger, the short sword and the pistol.

The now useless archer, dropping the bow when friend and foe were too thickly engaged to single out one from the other, turned to knife and sword and often to main strength, as he strove to heave a Spaniard overboard or drag one with him into the sea. Don John's men were greatly outnumbered, but the pirates were so massed that they could not fight to real advantage. As the Lizard swung round from its impetus, Moors pouring over the port quarter of the galley threatened the poop. This brought Don John himself into the fight. Seizing an axe, followed by his four gentlemen midshipmen and supported by as many mus-

keteers with knives, the nine hewed and slashed at the dark-skinned invaders until the deck was slippery and the sea between the galleys ran red.

The encounter was too savage to last. Driven from the Lizard, the Moors found themselves pursued to their own deck by the Spaniards. Some of them resisted, others began jumping into the sea. The pirate captain, surrounded by his archers, was close to his mast. Using his own men for a wedge, Don John endeavored to open a lane to him. The pirate chief, Aluch—tall, bronzed, robust and plainly of great strength—fought desperately, his bald head, now bare, rising conspicuously above those surrounding him.

So ferocious was the struggle and so stubborn the defense at the mast, that Don John could not at once come to grips with his enemy.

But while he hewed his way forward, Aluch's bald head disappeared. Seeing himself defeated, the renegado dashed back from the mast, sprang over the rail, and dived into the sea. So intense was the struggle all about him that Don John could not reach the rail in time to shoot. Aluch, swimming wild under the water, made good his escape in the fog, while his crew was still defending his galley.

But cries for quarter soon went up from the defenders; they went up in vain. Stabbed, clubbed, pistoled, and transfixed with their own arrows, the frantic Algerines sought escape in the sea. The Spaniards rooted out and dragged from their hiding places the last of the unhappy pirates who, screaming, fled here and there or sprang overboard to escape their cursing executioners.

Don John, followed by his officers, some of them bleeding freely, was about to step from the pirate deck back to the Lizard, when a shrieking victim,

clasping a diminutive monkey in his arms and closely pursued by two lusty Catalonians who were hacking at him with short swords, fell at his feet begging, in excellent Spanish, for mercy. The two pursuers, hesitating to kill at the Commander's feet, halted.

"He's *a la mort,*" exclaimed an officer to the pursuers. "Despatch the wretch; don't bother His Excellency."

"Hold!" exclaimed Don John, drawing a pistol to administer, if needed, the coup-de-grace. "He's a renegado!"

"No," cried the wounded man, stentoriously; "a captive, Your Excellency, a captive! Mercy! Mercy!"

"A captive!" echoed Don John ironically, looking at the blood-covered man lying at his feet. "A well-fed captive! How many of my Spaniards have you killed to-day?"

"None, my Captain, not one Spaniard. I was only a sword passer."

"*Only* a sword passer! A responsibility for a captive, my liar," laughed Don John, cocking his pistol.

But for every verbal thrust given him by Don John, the bleeding man had a defense, plausible if not convincing. He now clung beseechingly to Don John's ankles, and looking up into his face, pleaded, with many promises of devotion, for his life. A mop of coarse, black hair, bloodstained, covered his head, and his features were heavily pock-marked; in some earlier fray, one of his ears had been cut off close to his head.

Yet there was something about his manner or appeal that touched Don John, and he softened a little in the face of the wretch's eloquence. There was something oddly grotesque, too, in the spectacle of a man with his own life *in extremis* trying at the same time to save the life of a pet monkey. Moreover, it occurred

to the Commander that this man might give him valuable information. He waved aside the two waiting pursuers and ordered the man at his feet to Lopez, the surgeon.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE RENEGADO

"WHAT's your name?"

"Pedro, my captain."

Don John showed irritation. "Don't 'my captain' me," he frowned, examining the renegado, a few hours later, in his cabin. "Answer my question. If you lie, I'll hang you. I suppose you know this mangy captain of yours escaped?"

Pedro bowed his head reproachfully. He looked really mournful, but he spoke vindictively. "I would have killed him myself if I could. The devil slashed off this ear for me," he said, throwing back his hair to point to the mutilation.

"But the Sicilians have been warned and he can't get off the island," resumed Don John.

Pedro looked uncannily wise. "Don't believe it, Captain. He has friends enough on the Island—he has them planted on every coast."

"Who is he?"

"Calabrian—a renegado. A fisherman. A pirate, Excellency, as bloody as a Moor, and cruel as a Turk. And tricky—" Pedro completely at a loss for adequate words only threw up his hands.

"Where has he been operating?" continued Don John. "Has he any other galleys out?"

When he had put the much-bandaged Pedro through his examination concerning Aluch, he turned the questioning on his prisoner's affairs.

"I?" echoed Pedro. Then taking a leisurely breath of reflection he began:

"Excellency, I shall tell you all—hang me or not. I was born in Leganes. My uncle was musician to the great Emperor Charles V. Smallpox carried off both my parents. I became a muleteer, fell into rough company, Excellency—I was sent to the galleys. When I came out, I sailed, Excellency, in a trading ship for the Levant. We were captured—by this same accursed Scaldhead. Again I was put at the oar. He was the meanest dog of all Satan's brood. He lashed us, starved us, froze us. I saw it was death—no man lasted more than six months—mostly they were pitched overboard in three months or four. I stood it a year. Then I turned Moslem to escape from certain death. But at heart I was, and am, a Spaniard. I thought of my uncle——"

"What was your uncle's name?"

"Francisco Massi, Excellency."

"Had he any children?"

"No, Excellency."

"Did you know a boy who lived with him?"

"Very well."

"What was his name?"

"Jerome—I licked him once!"

"You mean he licked you, liar!"

Pedro stared wildly at his questioner.

"Who was the boy?" continued Don John.

"Excellency, he was said to be the son of Adrian de Bue, groom to the Emperor. Long afterward—after I was sent to the galleys, I heard the little rascal was a bastard of the Emperor himself. But can a man believe all he hears?" He paused and asked: "You must have lived in Leganes, Captain?"

Don John answered: "I lived near there once."

Then, apparently unmoved, he nodded to the guards between whom Pedro stood. "Take him below—send me the barber." Pedro, with much bowing and scraping, wasted away.

The barber-surgeon, Lopez' assistant, appeared speedily. "Ask Lopez to take good care of this renegado named Pedro. See that he is well fed." The barber's eyes opened but he bowed so low his surprise could not be seen. "And see," added Don John, "that his wounds are properly dressed every day." Knowing how slender a chance a Barbary prisoner had with a Spanish surgeon, he added, brusquely, "I look to you for his recovery. That's all."

Whether owing to this warning or not, Pedro made good even while the Lizard lay at Messina for reconditioning. For one thing, he played cards with such skill that he lined his pockets with the pay of his wounded companions.

He even impoverished the barber-surgeon. "You couldn't kill that brute anyhow you fixed it," growled the barber to Diego. "He'd get fat if he scraped an empty soup-kettle. Did you hear what happened yesterday? He got permission to go aboard the Algerine galley, brought over a cage for his infernal monkey and presented the beast to our captain—and the Captain was pleased, I hear. What do you think of that? Princes have queer tastes."

Despite the barber's dislike, however, Pedro made his way with the Spanish crew. And the monkey made his way with Don John, who named him in contempt, after the Sultan of the Turks, "Selim." On the trip back to Barcelona, the complement of oarsmen being somewhat reduced—twelve of them had been released for the fight and some of them killed and some wounded

—Pedro was put at an oar and gained the conditional favor of the suspicious Diego.

At Barcelona, Don John was received with popular acclaim. Despite the escape of the wily Aluch, he had brought in the enemy's best galley and the survivors of the redoubtable crew of the famous corsair. These were given over to the tender mercies of various Spanish boatswains throughout the fleet.

Requesens was delighted with Don John's exploit. Orgas not being able to find fault, beyond a reproof for the loss of Aluch, was suspiciously cordial. "Something is going to happen," said Don John to Sandro; "that old martinet was too nice this morning—he's putting a rod in pickle for me."

It was a month before the presentiment came true. The Lizard, refitted and manned with its sturdy fighters, proudest men in the fleet, after the Messina fight, and most sought by the port belles, was again ready for sea when an order came transferring Don John. Sandro was given the Lizard and Don John was assigned to an old galley, known as the Turtle. It was extra large, extra heavy in build and armament, and extra slow in movement. Don John gnashed his teeth, and cursed Orgas; but if orders were ever orders anywhere on earth, it was in the Royal Navy of Spain in the sixteenth century.

And now there loomed menacingly in the eastern sky for the first time in Don John's career, that dread and centuried threat to Europe and its civilization, the unconquered Turk. Word had reached the Spanish court through its French spies, that the new Sultan, Selim the Terrible, likewise known as Selim the Sot, had despatched a powerful squadron under Aluch Ali, the slippery renegado, who had been made a Pasha, to

western waters to feel out the Spanish naval strength —preparatory, it was believed, to assembling a great fleet to drive the Christian powers from the Mediterranean.

Something akin to consternation struck the court. And the commanders of His Majesty's naval forces were plunged into a sudden and painful activity. They were to confront a foe merciless in conflict and a flag that had never yet been lowered on sea before a Christian standard. Orgas called his officers into council and took stock of his forces for offense and defense. Like all martinets, he was readier to give advice than to receive it; and aboard his luxurious galley in his resplendent uniform, he delivered in effect an oration in which he invoked every Spanish hero from the Cid to the reigning monarch; and beating his breast in a dignified way he declared that if ever the Turk ventured into Spanish waters he should rue the day. Having thus inspired his staff with his own indifference to danger, Admiral Orgas bowed them out of his official presence.

Requesens, Sandro and Don John left the conference with long faces. Sandro, with Italian gaiety, was first to recover his spirits. "There's one thing about Old Pomposity," he observed with a laugh. "He's not afraid of anybody."

"That's not so bad," suggested Requesens. "The worst of it is, nobody's afraid of him. Well—" he gave a long pause before he continued, "get your galleys into the best shape possible and be ready for whatever comes. The Lord looks after children and fools—perhaps He will have a care of us."

The juniors remained aboard Requesens' galley for dinner. The talk ran mostly on the Turk—as, indeed, most of the talk of Europe ran at that time. Requesens

had a very healthy respect for the savage marauders of the Mediterranean and did not allow his juniors to leave him that night with any idea of an easy victory over any Turkish force, big or little.

A month passed without an hour being lost to put all in readiness to receive the enemy. Meantime practically nothing could be learned of his movements. Just when and where he would be likely to strike, what his force, what aid he might expect from his Algerine allies—all this was wrapped in mystery. Don John chafed like a caged lion as the days went by and brought no news. In vain, Orgas was besought to send out scouting parties; he remained on his dignity, prepared to receive his foe in formal naval fashion, as approved by the tacticians of his day, and let it go at that.

"It is a characteristic of some men," said Requesens to his guests, Don John and Sandro, at dinner that night, "that they are prudent when they should be bold; and bold when they should be prudent."

No name was mentioned but the guests understood who was meant: Orgas fitted the description perfectly.

After lying in port when he should have been scouting the sea, he suddenly conceived the idea of striking, while awaiting the Turk, an incidental blow at the impudent corsairs of Algiers. These, emboldened perhaps by the rumors of the coming of Spain's powerful enemy, had again, since the brush at Messina, been growing active and annoying. And to add a touch of sentiment as well as a pledge of affection to his sire on the occasion, the orders were given by Admiral Orgas to sail on the King's birthday.

The Spanish fleet that left Barcelona on May 21 consisted of fifty-six galleys, half of them Spanish;

the remainder included twenty Neapolitan and Sicilian and eight of Giovanni Doria's Genoese galleys; these being in the pay of Philip. The were commanded by Doria himself.

Favored by good weather, the fleet reached African waters without incident.

The primary object of Orgas' attack was an island lying well off the port of Algiers. It had been for fourteen years occupied by the Spaniards only to be recaptured by the red-bearded sea king, Barbarossa; but that redoubtable corsair now slept beside the Bosphorus, as if still to threaten the White Sea that he had so often ravaged. With the lion long since asleep, Orgas planned to make the island a birthday present to his sovereign.

He was not to wait long for a challenge to his purpose. For two days, the Spaniards lay off the Algerian coast, at the mercy of the wind and wave, but fate protected them with a calm sea. At daybreak on the 23rd, the fleet stood off the island and within an hour the entire Turkish squadron lying, unsuspected, in Algiers itself, sailed out to give battle.

Orgas held the centre of his line, Doria the right, Requesens the left; Don John's Turtle rode on Requesens' extreme left, Sandro and the Lizard next to him; Requesens in a light cutter was rowed rapidly along his front, dressing the line and encouraging his captains. To Don John, on whose deck he stepped for a moment's confab, he gave a cynical parting injunction. "I don't know this Aluch Ali who's now a Pasha; but he's a limb of Barbarossa and may give us a stomachful. If things get too squally, remember—it's a long way home and your tub is slow. Start early!"

"What about you?" asked his junior.

Requesens shrugged his shoulders as he stepped over the rail and into the cutter. "I shall rest under the waves here as peacefully as anywhere."

Don John pointed a finger to his own breast as he laughed and retorted in an untranslatable Spanish idiom that might be rendered as: "What goes for my friend, goes for me!"

"If this webfoot is anything like old Barbarossa, his teacher, he will strike our centre," shouted Requesens as he waved from the cutter. "If he does—" His last words were lost in the turmoil.

Don John had already dressed for action: every gun and every man had been given precise orders; and among others, the order, dear to Requesens' heart, which promised death to the offender who should fire even a pistol before the word of command. The Algerine showed in his battle formation forty-six galleys. The Spanish line, wings thrown out, awaited him in a crescent. As he came forward, Aluch gradually drew his line into a blunt spearhead, the tip pointing at Orgas: Requesens had proved a good prophet.

Yelling as only ten thousand Turks could yell—an ear-splitting volume, deafening the air with savage clamor, Aluch's heavier centre vessels—his long, light galleys riding the wings—came swiftly on. His left and right were spread just enough to threaten Requesens and Doria, but not to engage them until he had made good his thrust at the centre. If it failed, the wings had only to spread wider in a general engagement.

Orgas met the onslaught with cannon, musketry and archers. But the Turkish arrows came in clouds that darkened the air. Discharged too soon, the cannon of the heavier Spanish galleys could not be reloaded before the ferocious barbarians were ramming their

startled foe. Orgas' great galley was boarded while the musketeers were recharging.

Hurled into confusion by the attack thus savagely concentrated on their best vessels, the Spanish centre, after a brief interval of gallant defense, wavered, broke and within thirty minutes the galleys not in full flight were scattered; and within thirty minutes were fast being cut to pieces by the maddened Turks.

With a precision that was admirable, Aluch's wing captains lost not a moment in playing their parts. The instant the Pasha pushed past Orgas they darted into the Spanish wings. On the right, Doria lost no time in beginning a masterly retirement; the Spanish centre was already in flight.

To Doria the only thing that appeared left was to save his Genoese galleys; and he attempted no more than, so to speak, a rear-guard action—though less to cover Orgas than to get away himself. His galleys were well-manned, swift, easy to manœuvre; thus, confronted by a victorious enemy he was able to withdraw despite long odds against him, in comparatively good order.

Not so, Don John. Had he been anchored to the scene he could hardly have been in worse plight. Realising the peril of his favorite captain, Requesens made every possible effort to support him. Unhappily, the Admiral, pierced by a Turkish arrow just at the critical moment of his defensive manœuvres, sank on the quarter-deck and was carried, unconscious, below. His second, intimidated by a situation growing every moment more desperate, sheered off the line; and Don John, in the midst of the disaster, was left to shift for himself.

CHAPTER XXX

THE ACTION OFF ALGIERS

THE young captain realized, the instant he saw the centre pierced, that whatever there might be for others, for him there was no retreat, no escape. It was the musket—he carried no archers—the sword, the axe, the dagger, and slavery or death.

The first order he gave when he saw the debacle of the centre was to Diego. "Strike the manacles from the oar captains. Give them daggers and axes. Keep them on the coursie—and screen the cannoneers," he thundered down at his cool-headed boatswain. "If we win, tell them they shall never go back to an oar after to-day."

It gave him thirty-six more fighting men, devils incarnate, who signalized their release and their chance for loot with a deep-throated roar as they sprang to quarters with axes, and thrust stout Spanish daggers into their belts.

The cannoneers had been ordered, under pain of death, to stick to their guns and keep them reloaded, though a hundred Turks should slash at them together.

But the Captain's main hope lay in a hundred of his Messina veterans whom he had wheedled little by little from Requesens off the Lizard and the galleys among which they had been scattered.

He had scarcely manned his deck and bulwarks anew when two Turkish galleys headed for the Turtle, their crews screaming like a thousand demons. Don John

held his fire until they were actually within ramming distance; then he let fly a salvo—every gun that could be brought to bear and every musket on board. The blast of ball and solid shot took the spirit out of the yell; it swept the two decks with a hail that filled them in an instant with dead and wounded men; it did not repel the enemy, but it took a sharp and bloody reef in the enthusiasm of his fighters.

Both galleys rammed the port quarter and shook the stolid Turtle from stem to stern; but its shell was tough. The screaming Turks poured over the bulwark. A hundred knives awaited them as they leaped on the Turtle's deck. The ferocious boarders found themselves impaled on a frise of daggers; it was butchery. But the Turks came on, undaunted, till the deck of the Turtle looked a slaughter pen.

Don John depressed his guns till he could rake the Turkish decks with a volley of canister. Then seizing a battle axe he jumped down to the deck and struck into the mêlée himself.

It was two hundred men against four hundred. But the deck of the Turtle was deluged with Turkish blood and the "Santiago!" of Don John as he fought his way toward the nearest Turkish captain, rang above the din in the ears of his men. Strong arms at his sides broke the interference as he fought forward. So thick lay the dead and dying that it was said afterward a man could at one time have walked from end to end of the coursie on a carpet of dead Turks. Appalled by the slaughter they faced and unable to dislodge the Spaniards under the Turtle's bulwarks, the maddened boarders were forced backward until Don John could reach the Turkish captain and driving him to the rail, tumbled him, dying, into the sea.

The Spaniards gave a great yell as he went over the

side. Don John, turning to survey the deck, saw who had helped him to make his way ahead; Diego on his right, a strangely attired Turk on his left. Don John raised his axe to brain him. Diego hastily intervened. "It's Pedro," he shouted. "Let him board the Turk!" In the blood-covered fighting man the Captain recognized his one-eared renegado. He was the first man over the Turkish rail and led half a hundred of the Messina men who sprang to the deck of the nearest galley after him.

Don John had regained his deck when he saw Pedro, his busy renegado, emerge from an opening under the Turkish quarter-deck. He carried a torch in one hand and a dagger in the other. Throwing away the torch he joined in the fight on the Turkish deck where a hundred men were locked in struggle for the possession of the galley. The decision was not long delayed. The resisting foe was forced toward the galley stern. Smoke rose behind them. Pedro with warning shouts pushed the victorious Spaniards back, and Diego in haste ordered a retreat to the Turtle—but on his arm, he proudly carried the Turk's colors. Thinking the Spaniards weakening, the fighting men of the Turkish consort, ignorant of their danger, scurried over the rail to the slippery deck of their companion galley.

The Turks soon found themselves between the swords of their enemies and flames breaking out behind them. With hideous cries they began to fall back. A wall of flame shot up from the stern of the doomed galley. A terrific upheaval followed the explosion of the magazine that Pedro had fired a few moments before. The quarter-deck rose in the air, and the wretched Moslems were blown up only to fall into the sea or into the burning hull where those of the miserable

slaves—many of them Christians, and chained to the oars—still living, writhed in agony as their death cries rent the air.

The consort seeing that all was lost, drew away from its unlucky companion. In doing so, it exposed itself again to the guns of the Spaniard. Charged with solid shot, Don John's cannon completed the Turkish disaster. Shot after shot hulled the fleeing consort. As water poured into the starboard quarter of the galley, it listed heavily, and with the merciless fire of the Spanish guns still tearing into it, sank by the stern and left the sea covered with wreckage and a litter of wounded and drowning men and swimmers, pursued by a hail of musketry from the Turtle.

Hastening down the coursie to the quarter-deck, Don John encountered Pedro. The one-eared victim of Aluch had knocked a wounded Turk down on the gangplank and was about to run him through with a pike.

"Hold!" cried the commander.

Pedro looked around, his features wild with anger. "He's one of Aluch's devils—he was at Messina."

The commander sought to quiet him. "Very good: but let us get some wear out of him. Put him at an oar."

"Captain," begged Pedro, "something tells me that if I don't kill him, I shall be sorry for it!"

"Nonsense," said the commander gruffly. "There's too much blood underfoot now. Throw him below and get the sand. A man can't stand up in this welter. Sprinkle the sand everywhere."

Sandro, on the Lizard, by this time had beaten off his assailants. The Lizard now swiftly approached, its commander shouting congratulations across the lumbering Turtle. Requesens, the moment he regained

consciousness, though badly wounded, had taken the quarter-deck and steered for the battle. Don John had put his fighting captains back on the oars and was heading with such speed as he could make for the victorious Turkish centre. With these three galleys—for the wounded vice-admiral gave his young captain the order to take the command—the Spaniards pursued the conquering Turks, cannonaded, and rammed them and snatched a victory from the victors.

Inflamed with the fighting spirit, the momentum of success carried the crews of the triple squadron into the very heart of the diminishing struggle only to spread death and destruction among an enemy who had thought the fight won.

Taken unexpectedly with the swift onset in their rear, discipline went by the board. Swooping on his victims like a hawk, Don John rammed, boarded, blew up or set fire to one after another of the enemy galleys. Captured Spanish galleys and their crews, Don John, blazing with victory, recaptured. Other Spanish galleys which in flight had escaped the victors, electrified by the spectacle of the incredible Spanish recovery, joined Don John and under the blows he dealt, the dismayed Turks were overwhelmed—the shameful defeat was turned into a decisive victory.

Only one triumph was denied the Spaniard. Transferring to Sandro's Lizard, he pursued Aluch toward Algiers. The Turkish commander's own galley was accompanied by a lighter consort which had suffered from the guns of the Turtle. For a time Aluch's race to escape the Lizard was a pretty one. But the Spaniard began to gain—his oarsmen drunk with success. The Algerine, weighing his awkward dilemma, abandoned his admiral galley to his enemy and transferred to the light consort, which despite all efforts to over-

haul it, brought its fleet commander safely under the fort guns of Algiers.

The admiral galley itself with its crew fell prey to Don John. In the hurry to leave it, the Turkish standard had been forgotten and with Aluch's colors stowed away in his own cabin on the Turtle and his vessel in tow, Don John with a final salvo of defiance delivered toward his beaten foe, turned for the scene of battle to give his crew their chance for the plunder of the rich Turkish vessels.

He joined Requesens on the vice-admiral galley to ask after his wound.

"You didn't take my advice," complained Requesens, heavily bandaged but buoyant in spirit.

"What advice, my Admiral?" asked Don John, apprehensively.

"To start for home early while the starting was good!"

"They would have been sure to catch me, my Admiral. Where is Orgas?"

"His last address was Barcelona. I expect he's there by this time."

"Where is Doria?"

"Doria," continued Requesens, bitingly, "decided it would spoil the varnish on his boots to get his feet wet—he must be close to Genoa by now!"

The homeward path of the victors lay toward the verdure-covered island to which Orgas had taken a fancy; it lay green and beautiful before them. Don John, who was still with Requesens on the flagship, suggested they go ashore and wait till their galleys had gathered up the Turkish vessels, and placed securely in tow such of these as were damaged or undermanned.

Requesens, Don John and Sandro were set ashore by the longboat. The Bey of Algiers, in the fourteen years of his ownership, had transformed his possession into a lovely park and on a sheltered slope built for himself below the ruins of a massive old fortress, a commodious and palatial summer villa. This had been placed with a rich setting of gardens and orchards in the midst of groves of orange, lemon, fig and pomegranate trees.

The place seemed completely deserted, the servants having fled in panic on the approach of the Spanish galleys, to the dense wood behind the old fortress.

The afternoon was warm, and the shade grateful to the heated and weary Spanish commanders. Chaffing one another lightly and humorously on the life of ease the Algerian governor must enjoy within such surroundings, they sought the large patio with its pavement and fountains of white marble; just beyond the patio lay the marble baths with tesselated pavements. From the patio, the three sought the restful garden and seated themselves on one of its glazed-tile seats, set within the protection of fragrant orange trees. The sultry warmth of the evening and the fatigue after the day of strenuous work left the Spaniards in little mood for conversation, and lapsing into somnolent quiet, they made no effort to maintain one.

Sitting in this wise for some time, Don John suddenly sprang to his feet and drew his dagger. His companions hastily followed suit. At some distance in front of them, a young but full-grown lion, walking down one of the myrtle-bordered paths, was in leisurely manner approaching them. He seemed to have caught sight of the Spaniards about the moment that Don John caught sight of him.

The lion halted as they surveyed him, and to their

surprise raised one of his massive paws. Presently he calmly resumed his march toward the alien intruders and stopped again just before Don John, who had stepped ahead, dagger drawn, to defend his wounded commander by taking what seemed an impending attack.

To the amazement of the apprehensive mariners, the beast, putting his head to the ground, walked to Don John as a dog would do, sniffed, rubbed his nose on the Prince's feet and lay quietly down with his head resting on his paws. While the Spaniards breathed, amazed, they perceived a Nubian slave approaching from the direction of the baths, and with such pantomime as the black could summon, he tried to tell them that the lion was tame, and belonged to the Bey, but lived on friendly terms with all attached to the villa.

Pleased and rather stirred at the extraordinary novelty, Don John, sitting down, stroked the tawny mane of the beast. And, as the historian of both the man and the beast records, an instant current of sympathy seemed to flow between the "Lion of Austria," and the "Lion of the Desert." The latter was at all events destined to become Don John's faithful attendant. The light-hearted Prince then and there gave him his own name, "Austria," and delighted with his find, led him down to the longboat in which the beast peaceably embarked, to the consternation of the crew, and amid the laughter of Don John's companions. He was taken without trouble aboard the flagship and left with entire contentment in the longboat for a lair.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE ACTION OFF ALGIERS

Of Aluch Ali's formidable squadron of the morning there remained at nightfall sixteen of his forty-six galleys that had escaped Spanish clutches, and these with their demoralized crews and damaged equipment made the port of Algiers. Seven galleys had gone on the rocks in efforts to escape their pursuers. The hulks of eleven lay at the bottom of the sea, and twelve under Spanish prize crews followed the victors into Barcelona.

On the morning after the battle, Don John had a long talk with Diego; when he dismissed him he sent for the renegado, Pedro.

Pedro, cap in hand, made his way up to the quarter-deck where Don John sat under an awning.

"You did well yesterday, Pedro, firing the Scald-head galley."

"Give me a chance to do better, my captain."

"You have done some fighting before," continued Don John.

Pedro shrugged his shoulders. "I should like to do some for you, Captain."

"But you've been fighting on the wrong side."

"My misfortune, my captain."

"Diego tells me that when the head of the cannoneer on the swivel-gun was taken off, he put you on the gun. Have you had other practice on a swivel?"

"The Algerines carry nothing as heavy as yours, my captain. But with a little experience——"

Don John now addressed him in that jargon of the Mediterranean known as Lingua Franca—the polyglot used by Spaniards, Frenchmen and Italians in talking with Moors, Turks and Greeks.

"You should have picked up a good deal of information, Pedro, while in the service of Scaldhead—about his fighting tricks and so on."

"I was under that blot for two years; I had a year in the Levant."

"Have you been in Constantinople?"

"More than once."

"You could be useful to your country in a business that would pay you well, Pedro."

"Meaning—my captain?"

Don John studied his man carefully before continuing. "As a spy."

Pedro smiled. "With one ear?"

"It's not so much what you hear as what you see. I will discuss that again with you. Mix with the prisoners and talk with them. Meantime, keep the swivel-gun, Pedro."

Pedro saluted, bowed low and went down the ladder with a grin. He had won his prize hoped for—the big cannon.

Requesens came over during the morning. "How are we going in?"

"With you leading, of course, my admiral."

Requesens shook his head. "The Turtle should lead."

Don John would not have it so. "There'll be row enough when Orgas gets all this, anyway. I'd rather sneak in under your wing."

"Have it so. But the Turtle keeps the Turkish colors, remember that."

"Diego tells me that most of the captured galleys

are laden with spoil from three of the Venetian argosies taken by Aluch last week. We should have a prize court. But Orgas will claim everything, of course."

The embarrassing moment when the senior admiral saw the left wing of his scattered fleet limping into port laden with spoil as proof of victory wrung from the jaws of defeat, afforded a surprise for everybody, including Requesens and Don John himself.

Orgas promptly summoned Requesens to his galley to learn how he had escaped. Requesens pointed to the open sea where his galleys were stringing slowly in with the treasure-laden Turkish galleys behind them. The Admiral heard his junior's extraordinary story without a trace of discomposure. All martinets are pompous. But the case of a Spanish naval martinet of the sixteenth century would be a whole correspondence school in poise and pomposity.

Admiral Orgas never turned a hair.

"Where is Doria?" he asked as a preliminary.

"He made a good start," answered Requesens with some bitterness. "By this time he should be in Genoa."

The Admiral's reply was ready. "Doria uncovered my right," he complained with the calmness of an injured man, "obliging me to retire or risk the loss of my fleet before Aluch Ali's superior force. I knew, however, that you would give a good account of yourself."

"Not I," protested Requesens, equally poised. "Not I, but Don John, won the victory. I was knocked down by a Turkish arrow. When I came to, the Turtle had burned one enemy galley, sunk another, and was heading after Aluch who was still pounding the center—wherever he could establish a contact with the slower units of it. It was Don John who led the counter-

attack, aided by the Lizard under Prince Alexander Farnese——"

"Do you mean to say," demanded Orgas, nettled, "that you had no part in it?"

"Only such support as a wounded senior could afford a brilliant junior already on his way to victory. Give the boy the credit—and look—" Requesens pointed to the sea, "there he comes in the lumbering old Turtle."

Orgas spoke quietly to a captain at his side. "Send the swiftest couriers in Barcelona after my messenger to the King. I will add to my early report. What," he asked, resuming his talk with Requesens, as he looked seaward, "is that trailing in the sea at the stem of the Turtle?"

"The colors of Aluch Ali," answered Requesens, with a pardonable touch of pride in his tone. "Don John engaged his galley, while Farnese and I were fighting off the interference. He hulled Aluch's galley and boarded it. Aluch escaped by the skin of his teeth on a light, swift consort to Algiers."

"Why," demanded Orgas, "is the captured standard trailing from his stern and not yours, in accordance with our regulations?"

"I was unwilling to rob him of the credit. It trails from the Turtle by my orders!"

Don John laughed when Requesens told him of the interview, that night. "No wonder, my admiral, you are not popular in the service. You are too brave, too unselfish, too blunt to be liked by our martinet commanders. You should have a dose of court life such as I have had, to qualify for high naval honors. Did you hear what happened to Aluch's standard? Orgas sent for it this afternoon; it reposes now in his own galley."

"It's a wonder he didn't confiscate your lion, too," suggested Requesens.

Don John raised his head. "Ah!" he exclaimed, "fortunately 'Austria' was not in very good humor when Orgas visited my galley; and our Admiral started visibly when he saw him, in my cabin, lying at the foot of my bed. I explained how I got hold of the brute, and offered him to the Admiral as a present. Don't think I meant it—I am already becoming too much attached to the big fellow. But if you could have seen the Admiral's look of consternation when 'Austria' slowly rose, sniffed the air, and took a step toward him, you would have realized there was not the slightest danger of my bluff being called."

The young Prince was quite sincere in his confession that he was growing fond of "Austria." Day and night thereafter the lion never left Don John's presence. He was as faithful as a captain of the guard. In all the interviews given by Don John in his cabin, he rested a foot on "Austria" as the beast lay stretched before him—his chin resting like a hound's between his paws, while he good-naturedly wagged his tail. He attended his master, afloat or ashore, at table or at mess, eating whatever Don John tossed to him. He would come whenever called, and at sea always made his home in the longboat. Ashore, when the prince rode horseback, the lion stood at his stirrup like a lackey; and when his master fared forth on foot, the animal followed as if he were a page. There was no duty or function at which the mild and obedient beast was not present. He was, in fact, a member of the household on day and night service; and if anyone angered him by teasing, a mere word from Don John would restrain and quiet him down.

CHAPTER XXXII

WILD GOOSE CHASE

The Spanish court was made happy by Admiral Orgas' report. He recounted with composed eloquence the details of his signal victory in the action off Algiers, over Aluch Ali. The King at Perez' suggestion sent his naval chief another decoration.

Orgas himself, however, was not wholly at ease even after the decoration. The question as to whether he had cleared for calmer waters would be, he knew, if raised, a debatable one. The tactics in the premises seemed to call for activity on the part of the victorious Admiral. He began his campaign of conquering the waves with an order to Don John to assemble a light squadron of swift galleys.

With these under command, he was to base at Messina and scout the eastern waters for signs of Turkish activities; not to engage the enemy, but to learn what he could of the designs of the Sultan's naval forces. It had long been rumored that Selim the Sot was building and assembling a fleet more powerful than any hitherto launched by the Sublime Porte, for the final conquest of the Mediterranean.

This roving assignment pleased Don John. But Requesens was much incensed at it, even going so far as to protest to Orgas against exposing the King's younger brother to the perils of this "wild goose chase" into the Eastern Mediterranean.

Orgas, always calm and never hurried, save when

Turks or Moors were after him, waved aside all objections. He had not forgiven—nor did he ever forgive —the youngster's insolence in sailing into Barcelona, trailing Aluch's standard in the sea from the stem of his own galley; and the order stood. Requesens was indignant, but Don John was secretly elated and with Sandro second in command, lost no time in starting with six of the King's speediest, best-manned craft for Messina. And a bed was made for "Austria" in the longboat of Don John's galley.

The night before he sailed, Requesens gave the two youngsters a notable dinner and filled them, besides, with all manner of precatory advice. "If anything happens to you two gentlemen, I shouldn't like to be in Orgas' boots," he said in bidding them goodnight. "Your mother," he added, speaking to Sandro, "will never forgive her royal brother and she will tear every hair from Orgas' beard if he loses her son. And the royal brother himself," he continued, addressing Don John and referring to Philip, "will hold Orgas remorselessly to account for anything that happens to *you.* Alive, he is not so careful of you. But dead! Well, my John, just watch *me* lie low!"

The vice-admiral's half-restrained apprehension for the fate of his two captains was miserably heightened a few days after the departure of the "noble cousins" by the receipt of a letter from Don Luis Quixada asking as to the welfare of Don John; it had been received within the day that the little squadron set sail.

"I should not thus encroach on your attention," wrote Don Luis after his questions about his former charge, "but for the earnest request my wife, Doña Magdalena. We spent last week at our castle near Villagarcia. While there we visited the convent of Yuste and were the guests over night of the Fathers,

sleeping in the wing from which the soul of my lord and master, the Emperor, took flight.

"The night was stormy; not unlike that of His Majesty's death. Our rest—particularly that of Doña Magdalena in the chamber communicating with my own—was much disturbed by the harsh croaking of a strange bird. My wife, trembling, called to me to ask if, through the wind and the rain, I could hear it. Thus aroused I heard the bird only too well; and it brought very unpleasant memories, for I had not before heard it since the memorable—and to me always mournful—night of the death of my lord, Charles.

"In the morning I made diligent inquiry of the Fathers. I learned that they, too, had heard the bird of evil omen and I was told it had not visited the convent or been heard in the neighborhood since the royal demise.

"Do not, my dear Requesens, think me over-given to the observance of signs and omens. Yet this bird is never seen and never heard save when a great misfortune overhangs the House of Austria.

"On our return to Madrid, I made instant inquiry concerning the health of His Majesty; and having found him safe and well, I am writing you concerning his brother, very dear to me and to my wife from early association—as you well know."

"What am I to say?" the commander asked himself in perplexity. "I know of nothing we now can do," he wrote to Don Luis, acquainting him fully with the strange situation, "save to commend these young men to God's keeping. As long as Perez holds His Majesty's ear, so long will Orgas work his will in the navy. Let us hope that your evil bird may this time be at fault."

Had Requesens been a seer for the space of a fort-

night following Don John's deparature, he certainly would have believed the winged bird at fault. All went well. It was June, the weather was propitious; no enemy was encountered, not even a pirate. Setting out from Messina, Don John stood for Corfu, where he reconditioned, repainted his galleys, and laid in a plentiful store of the Turkish colors, red and white Turkish apparel—even the loose trousers, long, flowing robes and gray felt caps of the Janissaries—and Turkish weapons—for whatever adventure might befall.

But in tarrying at Corfu the young commander had more than these objects in mind. At Corfu a continual stream of traders to and from the Orient, stopped for refitting, for barter, and for exchange of news. Corfu was a sort of clearing-house, an information exchange for the affairs of the Levant. Venetian argosies called at Corfu, irregular and irresponsible naval adventurers stole into Corfu, under cover of night, to learn what price, or prices, had been set on their heads by rulers most at interest in their depredations. A dull market in prize-money afforded them a chance to show themselves in daylight and to repair their ships while hatching some fresh maritime roguery.

With the crews of these craft of varying size and respectability, Don John encouraged his men to mix, that they might pick up all possible information concerning the Turk.

Discounting the wild rumors that can always be garnered under such circumstances, the results proved mostly negative. Don John therefore sailed southward. He followed the channel to Ithaca and heading east, passed a group of rocky isles. Doubling Cape Skropha and lurking along the indented coast, the adventurers captured a sleepy Turkish brigantine, whose crew awoke, rudely surprised, to find itself, in friendly

waters, in the hands of a Spanish captain. Two prisoners on this brigantine, Venetian traders, gave the Spaniard the news he had so long coveted. From the Venetians he learned that the Turkish admiral, Ali Pasha, had recently strengthened a fort and an ammunition base up the gulf at Lepanto. And having completed his work, had sailed, with some sixty odd galleys, only the day before.

Sandro sat with Don John listening to the story. The two looked at each other; a slight perspiration moistened their foreheads. The fortune of escaping the dread Turkish commander by twenty-four hours was breath-taking news. Which way had he sailed? Southward—further than this the Venetians knew nothing. Had he troops? The Venetians thought not; workmen, yes; but troops, they were quite sure, no.

The two captains consulted together. Without a formidable complement of troops, Ali was obviously not on a warlike expedition. Likewise, the Turkish commander-in-chief was too big to indulge in a mere pillaging raid. But why his presence here with a squadron of galleys, a force of workmen strengthening a fort and base at Lepanto?

The first conclusion reached was that he had sailed for Constantinople to take home his engineers and artisans: the second was, that the reinforcing at Lepanto pointed to some future operation, the scope of which was his proper secret.

What to do next was the burning question before the novice captains. Both were destined to become famous commanders; both possessed that spirit of prudence combined with daring that characterises men for whom the womb of the future reserves great careers.

After long conference the two resolved to commit

to paper—each apart—their answers to the question that called for a decision. Having done this, each handed the other the slip containing his answer. They opened the exchanged slips, read, looked at each other and laughed. The two bits of paper bore identical words:

"Follow the Turk."

CHAPTER XXXIII

CAPTURE

AGAIN the Spanish galleys stood to the south and to the east. They skirted the long coast line of the Morea—husbanding their supplies and picking up food and water as they progressed. Here and there they heard news of Ali Pasha and his fleet but kept at a respectful distance behind him in crossing toward the Dardanelles.

Every device that Don John could invent and Pedro could suggest was brought into play to conceal the identity of his vessels. His galleys in color, design and accoutrement were in effect Turkish; even his few troops were arrayed as Turks, the galley slaves as Christian prisoners.

At the Dardanelles, Ali paused to dress his galleys before proceeding into Constantinople. The Spanish spies lurked along coves and bays of the shore line. To make the most of the situation and to pry into as many secrets as possible of the Turkish war vessels, Don John, after consulting with Sandro, fixed on a daring adventure. Sandro pronounced it rash; but his cousin was not to be dissuaded.

Taking with him only Pedro and a sailor in the small boat, he followed the shore line until he encountered a Greek fisherman. From him he bought his boat and the night's catch of fish, put him in with the sailor and ordered him rowed to the galley and detained there until Don John's further orders. When

his boat was no longer needed he was to be set free in it.

Both Pedro and his captain had no fears as to language: Pedro was, in effect, a polyglot, equal to any tongue along the Mediterranean; while Don John, on his way, had already mastered a good deal of Lingua Franca.

Before embarking as two fishermen, Pedro on shore hunted up a walnut tree. With the juice of the green nuts he stained Don John's visage and body so skillfully that his closest friend would not have known him. This done and with Don John at the oars, the pair set out to sell their fish to the Turks. Day after day, the two kept this up. The Greek, well guarded, let down the net at night and his confederate partners marketed the catch among the Pasha's sailors. At times Don John even succeeded in getting aboard the galleys and remaining long enough to acquaint himself with arrangements, equipment and armament.

Up to this time the weather of the fickle Mediterranean had favored the Spaniards. In the eastern Aegean, however, rough weather developed all too soon to suit Don John. The Greek could with difficulty cast his nets; the market was good but fish could hardly be provided.

The Spanish commander was profiting so much by his visits with the Turks that he was loath to give them up; his persistence issued in his undoing.

On the last day that Pedro and his captain visited the Pasha's fleet a storm blew out of the north with almost the force and suddenness of a hurricane. The fisher boat, Pedro pulling at the oars, was half the way back to the hidden Spaniards when the small boat capsized and the two men were thrown into a boiling sea and forced to swim for their lives. The black sky

charged with cloud and wind and rain had already blotted out the coast line and landmarks. But Don John believed they could make shore. Both men were experienced swimmers and had not more, he thought, than a mile to do.

It proved, however, a long mile and in addition to the difficulty of keeping together, Pedro, to Don John's surprise, began to show fatigue. They reached a shore line only to be warned away by the crash of breakers dashing against a barrier of rocks. Pedro, spent, called to his captain to save himself. Don John made light of the plea and encouraged his companion to struggle on. Reaching the vicinity of a sandy beach, he shouted a cheering word over to Pedro; but the big fellow was used up. Don John swam toward him. Pedro was sinking. The captain managed to get an arm under his shoulder and by dint of some shouting and much effort, dragged him past the undertow and close enough in for the breakers to cast both up on the beach—two exhausted men.

Panting they sat on the sand in the driving rain, Pedro with his one ear and fast-heaving breast was so mournful a sight as to be a ridiculous one. Don John could not, and did not, forbear laughing at him; and though Pedro resented it, the effect on him was beneficial.

"Sailor's luck, Pedro!" exclaimed Don John philosophically. "We must hunt up a peasant's hut now and get dried out; then try to get back to our galleys."

But after the drowned pair had found refuge with a Turkish sheepherder their troubles had only begun. The storm increased in violence and the Spanish galleys had to leave their hiding places to avoid being blown on the rocks. For three days the wind blew and the rain fell. When the storm had abated, Don John and

Pedro looked in vain for a trace of their companions at sea. They had, in fact, been scattered and driven so far from the northern coast that Pedro and his captain after a week of shifting about for food and shelter, realized the chances of ever seeing them again were very slender. A fortnight spent in vain effort to get a sight of the galleys convinced both that they must now shift for themselves.

Pedro was good at foraging and his captain gave him an example in patience. One day Don John, in scanning the sea, perceived a bark under sail putting in for shore. A small boat was lowered and a party of sailors landed not far from where the two stranded Spaniards were watching. Stepping into view as the landing party approached, Don John hailed the boatswain in Italian to ask what countrymen they were. The bark proved to be Venetian, homeward bound from Joppa, blown off its course by the storm, and the landing party was after water.

Pedro guided them to the spring nearest at hand; and in Lingua Franca sounded them out about passage. As to this, the boatswain thought there would be no difficulty; and there was none. The real difficulty arose two days afterward when in summer seas and buoyed by a favoring breeze, a one-masted Turkish galliot, overhauled and captured the trader—for the Venetians made but a feeble resistance despite the efforts of Don John and Pedro to put some fight into them; and the errant Spanish prince found himself with his factotum and the crew of the trader bound for the slave market of Constantinople.

Pedro's heart sank. Should he be recognized in the Turkish capital by any of his old Moorish associates —and the identity tag of a missing ear made this comparatively easy—he would undoubtedly be flayed alive

—and in that day on the Mediterranean, flaying was in nowise a figurative term: it meant that he would be skinned like a rabbit from top to toe.

Don John promised he should neither be tortured nor strangled, and reminded him that the scenery was good and the weather delightful; where the composed youth got his store of assurance in calamitous circumstance, Pedro was long perplexed in trying to fathom.

"My Captain—" he expressed with grim humor his semi-respectful skepticism, "just what are your guarantees worth in the courts of Selim the Sot?"

"Just what, indeed?" echoed Don John in cynical retort. "I can at least advise you, Pedro," he observed, "to be patient; to keep your hair well combed over your missing ear; and to say 'Selim the Sultan' until you are well out of the clutches of 'Selim the Sot.'"

Little as Don John had been interested through the painstaking efforts of his tutors in classical lore, his pulses quickened a trifle as the galliot, on which he was held, raised the entrance to the ancient Hellespont one June morning. Leander's feat, as one of physical prowess in swimming the famous strait nightly to visit his beloved Hero, was one of the few Greek legends that had fixed itself in his memory—as it has in the memories of so many lovers, old and new.

Toward noon he saw in the north the two castles of Mahomet II, a century old; and as the sun passed meridian, there rose suddenly above the narrowing strait two stern promontories.

It needed no guide to tell him what these guardians of the Narrows were. Here Leander had lived; here he had loved; here he had perished. Standing apart from the other prisoners, Don John surveyed the entrancing landscape until the rising moon deepened

the beauties of the scene, and wrapped it in silver mystery.

After delays in crossing the sea of Marmora—with which he was soon to become so familiar—the royal prisoner woke one morning at dawn to look from the deck of the galliot on a scene not to be effaced from his memory.

On a lovely slope to the east, placed as if in the midst of a vast amphitheatre, rose the mosques and minarets of a Byzantine city. The sight stirred his blood; its centuried magnificence had stirred the blood of unnumbered adventurers before him. Tamerlane himself, scourge in his day of the barbarous Turks, had said after viewing it, that of all possible sites for a city from which to rule the world, that of Constantinople was the best.

Tamerlane, indeed, with whose name Turkish mothers hushed their frightened children, had beheld that city as a sovereign guest.

A Spanish prince, one day to deal its unspeakable ruler a blow from which his empire never recovered, looked on it now as an obscure prisoner destined for its slave market. But with the names of Timur, Huniades and Scanderbeg, history was one day to write, as those who shattered the great Turkish ambition, that of the nameless youth now viewing, breathlessly, its capital's morning splendour—Don John of Austria.

Communing with no one about him, save to commiserate with the Venetian captain on his ruinous losses and his approaching slavery, Don John divided with Pedro the scant loaf which with a jug of water served as breakfast, and wrapped himself in his thoughts and in contemplation of the scene before him. He took keen note of the commodious harbor and with his fellow captives readily followed the Turk-

ish captain to the market for slaves—reflecting to himself how easy it would have been, with half a dozen of his own pretty men—like Diego, Gaspar, Pedro—to have captured the galliot itself during the night just passed and ultimately landed its Turks at the slave market in Messina. But the traders? They gasped at the sight of a scimitar.

Once into the streets of Constantinople, the moving beauty of the magnificent site with its opulent majesty of mosque and palace, was wholly lost. Narrow, crooked, filthy and steep, faced with low houses built of clay or wood, each street seemed more revolting than the last. But sailors' stomachs are stout, and once the slave market reached, Don John took his place among his fellows without complaint or visible emotion.

At certain times and certain seasons, Pedro explained to him, the slave demand might be light. But the Turkish captain had struck a brisk market. The government shipyards and arsenals were very busy. For the first time in history, the Turk had come into collision with the northern bear, the Russian; and somewhat disastrously. Nassy, Selim's degenerate favorite, next looked covetously on the island of Cyprus. He directed thereto the eyes, bleared with lust and debauchery, of his master Selim, who was making ready to descend on its fair domain with his devastating hordes; hence the shortage throughout the Empire of man power.

The Venetians were priced moderately and went fast. The pawky Turk believed that the two Greek fishermen, Don John and Pedro, should bring more money and priced them higher. In consequence, they went slower, and stood in the burning sun until high

noon when a prospective buyer appeared in the long portico bearing every evidence of resource and delegated authority. He was a small man, unusually well-dressed and characterized by a certain briskness of manner that indicated one used to giving as well as receiving orders. His dark, deep-set eyes, were not unkindly nor was his large nose. The furrows across his forehead and his heavily wrinkled cheeks put him past middle life; and the general aspect of his features indicated a Semitic strain. He was attended by four strapping Ethiopians whose shining black skins glistened in the sunshine and these had in tow three Sicilian slaves, already selected and bought.

The small man fell at once into a lively confab with the galliot captain, scrutinizing keenly all the time the two prisoners remaining from his capture. Don John, unshaven and unkempt, made no effort to encourage or hinder a sale, though he looked with curiosity at his possible master. Pedro, his hair carefully drawn over his mutilated ear, straightened up a little as he, too, looked on, thinking that his companion and himself might fall into the hands of an opulent merchant where they could be well-fed and cared for.

But though the superficial appearance of Don John did not invite admiration, there was in his figure and manner a conscious dignity that did not escape the practised eye of the buyer.

Muley—such was his name—pointed toward Don John. "I will buy him if you'll come down from your crazy price. It is ridiculous. Yes, young, I admit, fairly well built," said Muley, walking round the imperturbable Spaniard who looked on his future master with the same unspoken contempt as that with which he regarded his present one. "But at your price—

never! Mehmed," said Muley to his head black, "move on!"

The Turk grew uneasy as his buyer walked away. He ran after him, stopped him. Muley faced about and as the two, talking fast, approached the prisoners, the haggling began all over again. "What will you give me for the two?" demanded the captain.

"Don't want the two," objected Muley. Whereupon the Turk harangued him on the unusual merit in size, strength and manhood of Pedro. Muley was deaf to eloquence. The Turk, no other buyers appearing on the horizon and the market day being well spent, then declined to sell the pair apart. Muley was secretly determined for reasons of his own to have Don John. His eyes fairly feasted on the well-set-up young man. Pedro also put in his oar. "Buy me," he urged, towering above the small buyer. "Buy him, but buy me, too. He doesn't know what's going on here: he can't talk a word of Turkish—can't talk anything much. Good looking, yes: I admit it; but far from bright. He needs me. I have the brains and the muscle—I can handle him. Buy us both. Look at my arm! At home this youth is my servant—I, his master."

And so, after an almost ferocious war of words, Pedro and his silent companion were knocked down to Muley for gold ducats, drawn from a purse so well filled that the purchase price left it apparently as heavy as ever; and the two took their place in Muley's procession.

"What's it all about?" asked Don John of his fellow.

"I don't know yet. These fellows are all lalas—eunuchs——"

"Including the little man?"

"Including the little man," said Pedro. "But on your life, my captain, forget you speak Spanish. Lingua

Franca now till you pick up a little Turkish. And I must forget you are my captain—play as low down in the social scale as you can and give me a name whereby to call you—till we see happier days."

CHAPTER XXXIV

MIRIAM

Pedro was a good mouser; of an effrontery politic rather than rash; suspicious of all men and false to most, he was yet faithful to a kind master. In a master, he found an outlet for his natural bent toward hero worship; should such a master not chance to be a hero, Pedro would probably make one of him.

He was to a degree crafty and to a greater degree possessed of an ingratiating disposition. Condemned to the scaffold, Pedro would beyond doubt have made friends with the hangman before being swung off; and the moment in which he had successfully begged his life at the muzzle of Don John's pistol, was not his first success in like circumstances.

That night all of the captives, taken in a galley to what seemed some distance by water, lay in a commodious bagnio, after a supper the fare of which was neither very good nor very bad: Pedro, experienced in these misfortunes, pronounced it surprisingly good. The evening was warm and Don John, buried in thought, sat on the prison terrace, casting up his situation and considering every possible manner of escape.

Pedro had wondered at his master's unconcern. Pedro did not know that Don John had but to appear before the Venetian ambassador, arrange terms of ransom for a brother of the very powerful King of Spain, and the business would be done.

But this procedure Don John held in reserve for

only the direst emergency—something a long way beyond his present plight. Here I am, reasoned the Prince, in the very heart of the enemy country. Am I to leave it, by impoverishing my august Brother, without learning all I can about its military resources —specifically, its naval strength, its reserves, its preparations for the offensive of which we have heard so much? To ask such questions was to answer them emphatically and with one word: No. Had such a temptation as to be dropped into the heart of Constantinople been offered him, during his galley days at Barcelona, he would have unquestioningly grasped it; his mind was bold and his disposition adventurous.

Here he was then, in Constantinople, and in a condition of servility and obscurity best calculated to allow him to pick up information of much value, and he was not altogether unhappy that fate had carried him so far beyond his own designs. What he had resolved on as the position now most to be sought was work in the Turkish navy yard. It should not be difficult to secure this. Skilled workers were so scarce that Christian slaves were often thus employed, and Don John, through Barcelona discipline, was thoroughly experienced in the building of a galley.

These thoughts were running through his head when Pedro joined him. "What news, Pedro?"

"News a-plenty," answered the ex-renegado, in his confident, confidential manner. He pointed to the great villa which, facing the sea, rose before them in the midst of an ample park. "Do you know whose place this is? It belongs to Ali Pasha."

"Who that sails the Mediterranean does not know Ali? Spain's worst enemy—Selim's Grand Pasha!" murmured Don John, moved in spite of himself and

speaking between guarded lips. "Who does not know Ali?"

"This building we are quartered in," continued Pedro, "is his bagnio—the place where his slaves are kept: we belong to the Grand Admiral. He has a harem in the city. No wife—she is dead. He has two young sons and a daughter. This is where she lives and this water is, as you have guessed, the Sea of Marmora."

"Where did you get all this?"

"I've been talking to the assistant to Muley, the grand lala. He asked who you and I were. Arnauts, I told him, fishermen, blown out to sea, taken up by the Venetian, captured by the galliot; and that my name was Pedro and yours Parda. He asked me whether we had had any experience with the oar." Pedro pulled a wry face. "A little," I said; "but we would rather fish —keep the household supplied."

"What did he say?"

"Nothing except—'That's what every loafer says. If we supplied every slave that wants to fish, with a net, there wouldn't be a skein of yarn left in Constantinople, nor a sardine in the Sea of Marmora.' So I shut up."

"Wise Pedro."

Pedro scratched his chin regretfully. "I don't think we'll get to do much fishing——"

"Wise Pedro."

"—at least," he mumbled with a faint gleam of hope, "not right away. I wonder what they're going to put us at?"

The day went in idleness. Certain of the captives diverted themselves by seeing how far each could jump in his chains. Pedro, an inveterate gamester, got up jumping matches and tried to gather to himself such

small coin of the captives as had escaped the search of the Turks. Don John, apart, watched listlessly and nursed his thoughts.

The sun rose next morning into a cloudless sky and again the captive prince looked with interest at the imposing pile of white marble that sheltered a portion of the considerable household of the redoubtable Pasha.

Overlooking the sea from a gentle rise and situated in the centre of a spacious domain of cooling woods and sunny gardens, stood the fiery Pasha's villa. The house, of Italian fashion, as Don John had already perceived, was generous in proportions and obviously built with great halls, high ceilings and roomy apartments calculated to defy the heat of summer and to provide, in-a-doors or out, refuge from the baneful scirocco.

Pedro came out of the bagnio. Orders had been sent by Muley for the captives to meet him at the garden pier, and thither the two Spaniards walked with the Venetian prisoners. Partly filled with men, two galliots stood alongside. They were being laden with house furnishings to be taken elsewhere. Eunuchs and women in a straggling procession were still carrying bundles and boxes from the villa down to the pier.

"Where is Ali Pasha?" asked Don John of Pedro.

"Of course he doesn't tell where he is," said Pedro, "but I suppose he's at sea—stirring up trouble for somebody. His daughter is making her island summer home ready, they say."

Muley came trotting down to the pier. He placed a number of servants in the two craft and put the Spaniards in with other captives, each at an oar, until both boats were manned. The boatswain on Don John's craft was a gray-bearded Moor, who chained him care-

fully to his rowing bench. How that galled the captive Spaniard, the matter-of-fact Moor never knew.

A brisk row of an hour along a seashore made pleasing with villas nestling among cedars of Lebanon, plane trees in full leaf, cypresses, pines and shrubbery, brought the galliots out to sea and saw them headed for one of the lovely islands dotting the Marmora. And after they had reached it the stuffs were unloaded and carried up to an attractive casino.

Muley, riding in the boat with the new men, had regarded each of them, on the oars, with an observant eye. On the following day, Don John and Pedro were given a new assignment. At the pier in the morning they found a pleasure barge, brought from one of the several boat-houses below the villa. They were told to take places in this to fill two vacancies at the oars.

Don John was not a stranger to pleasure barges; but the appointments of the barge before him were such as to excite surprise, accustomed though he was to examples of luxury. Mediterranean pleasure craft inclined to Oriental richness. But he now beheld a notable example of composed elegance rather than a mere profusion of luxurious trappings. It made a striking impression on him; he had not thought a Turkish influence capable of such ordered richness.

Places were provided for twenty-four oarsmen to supply the power when truant winds refused to caress the purple sails. Toward the stern lay a deck slightly elevated. The inlaid floor was covered with Persian carpets woven in designs intricate, yet so subdued as to lose themselves in blending harmonies of color. An ample silken canopy of green and cloth of gold, framed like a great cockle shell, overhung the pavilion, tempering the summer sun and in its beauty tempting summer breeze.

In the midst of this pavilion he saw a couch cunningly disposed under overflowing draperies and cushions in readiness to receive the mistress of the barge. In the rear of the pavilion a small, recessed door opened into a cabin matching in its appointments those of the pavilion itself. This little room, passing delicate, and not then seen by the curious Spaniard, was decorated, walls and ceiling, in colors blending into tones of rose. It was lighted by small windows hung both with silken curtains and jalousies. And in little cages, about these windows, tiny song birds rolled soft notes out on the morning air.

The adventurous prince took his assigned place among the oarsmen in the third row. It again gave him a queer start when a slave fastened a band and chain to his left ankle—made him realize once more his actual condition—a captive and a slave. But being in, he felt resolved to play his part through and consoled himself by recalling his end in view, and the fact that his submission was, in matter of fact, wholly voluntary.

But the leg-cuff and chain pointed the finger of shame at him every minute. The sight of the symbol of degradation was so revolting that swept by a brainstorm of revolt he made up his mind to abandon all his shrewd resolves and take the first opportunity possible to escape.

Hardly had he reached this conclusion when he was aware of a hush in the voices about him and perceived all eyes turned to the long avenue of cypresses leading from the villa to the marble steps at the water's edge. Four soldiers, from their dress, Janissaries, headed a small procession coming down to the pier. The Janissaries were followed by two tall, glistening blacks preceding a bevy of maids; these surrounded the mistress of the barge herself. Not until the company had

reached the marble steps could Don John, from where he sat, discern the Pasha's daughter. She was conversing with Muley, apparently giving instructions, as she paused, before stepping down to the pavilion.

Behind her stood an Ethiopian page, dressed from head to foot in scarlet, holding a sunshade above her head; and last of all, followed two additional black eunuchs of great size and strength, standing with arms folded and armed with formidable-looking scimitars.

The Spaniard's eyes were fixed on the central figure of this considerable spectacle—the daughter of Ali, Miriam.

She was of delicate figure and, he perceived, of a light complexion—evidenced by her hands and wrists and by her slender, jewelled ankles. Her veil concealed the regularity of her features but did not hide her eyes, which, like her hair, were dark. Barely sixteen, as he had already learned, she seemed almost in the bloom of womanhood if her erect carriage, full bosom, composed manner and satisfied ordering of her servitors were taken in evidence: it was apparent to Don John that she was both autocratic and accustomed to obedience. Yet her commands were given in a voice that seemed to imply no more than a request, and its tone was of a quality to soothe rather than to disturb the ear.

Her flowing jacket and trousers were of sheer white silk, dimmed in beauty of texture only by the transparent skin of its wearer. Cloth of gold, disposed in bands about her jacket and hemming her trousers, completed a costume simple and pleasing. From her neck depended a string of pearls of a size and lustre that would have made the elegance of a Spanish court look almost commonplace; for the women of her country excelled all others in the number and excellence of their pearls. Bracelets of gold enriched with an abundance

of diamonds encircled her arms, while anklets of like design caught the eye of the Spaniard as they contrasted with her ankles. The slight bare feet were supported by pantofles of the Turkish fashion, embroidered on the instep with turquoises and rubies. As Don John sat in the third row of the oarsmen, she passed, in walking to the pavilion, close to him. And when she extended her hand to Muley to step aboard the barge, the Spaniard perceived how it was quite at one with her feet and ankles: slenderly yet firmly proportioned and clothed in a milk-white skin through which faintly blue veins traced the current of her life-stream.

The barge drew away from the pier. Reclining on the couch, Miriam—fanned by two maids until the sea breeze made itself felt, when she motioned them away—lay in seeming indifference to everything in her surroundings. If no sail appeared close enough to attract her notice, she directed her gaze toward the villas along the shore that they were passing, and, all else failing, she looked from the veiled seclusion of her eyes at the recruits among her oarsmen.

She knew these were slaves from the city market—presumably, therefore, of the Christian superstition—of those strange, jarring people of the West, so barbarous in manners, so troublesome in war, so treacherous in dealing, so stubborn in defeat, so clever in strategem and so hating one another—people arrayed against people, kingdom against kingdom, race against race, and religion against religion.

From every clime and from every condition these Christian slaves came—princes, poets and artists, artificers and artisans, gentlemen and boors, gentlewomen and trulls—all found their way to the slave markets of Constantinople. Miriam herself, young as she was, but

her father's pet, had seen him bring them from his victories in shiploads—men, women, boys and girls, children in arms—an unshaven, unkempt, and sorely wretched mass of sweltering, thirsting, starving, despairing humanity, unspoken tragedies writ on dumbly suffering faces, and ribald jests bellowing from the lips of degraded men. These strange, strange giaours—they were a source of never-ending curiosity to the stern Pasha's favorite child.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE SURPRISE ATTACK

FREQUENT boat trips familiarized the captive Spaniards with their surroundings, and thus nurtured Don John's resolve to get away from his revolting bondage. He reasoned that he might reach the shipping, board a trading vessel, French, Venetian or other, and thus reach ultimate freedom. Fertile in resource, and indefatigable in action, he went over and over again, with Pedro, his plans for escape. These, Pedro listened to with respectful attention, but expressed himself in doubt as to their issue. However, the spirit of Don John would brook no interference with his design: and Pedro, perforce, promised obedience and coöperation.

The Spaniards had been in servitude a week when, the night being favorable—no moon after twelve, an overcast sky and a quiet sea—the captives made ready to swim from one of the boat-houses of the villa to the shipping quarter of the city. Their clothing, partly to be carried on their heads, would dry before daylight and as Arnauts they might hope to get passage in some wise as sailors.

Quartered in the same cell, they left dummies on their pallets before locking-up time, and together slipped out of the bagnio and stole in a round-about way into the dark garden where they sat silent or conversing in guarded tones, waiting for the moon to set.

The night was hot and this proved to be their undoing: but it was long afterward before Don John learned how they had been undone. The two, standing on the boat-house steps, had stripped for the adventure by the sea, when an armed guard confronted them. As these men sought to overpower their prisoners, a struggle followed. Don John, indeed, had beaten his assailants off and jumped into the water, when a fifth man emerged from the darkness, and a skiff bearing two men darted out of a slip close at hand.

The escaping Spaniard dived like a duck and in the darkness gave his pursuers a chase. There was a great splashing of oars, and water, and much shouting, with many stentorian calls from the shore to recapture the fugitive at all hazards. Two more skiffs, quickly manned, shot out from the slip both carrying lanterns. By an unlucky chance, Don John came up for air within range of the lantern of the first skiff and as he swam away, the man that was sculling struck at him with his oar. It was a glancing blow but it slowed for a moment the fugitive's stroke and the skiff overtook him. Nothing at a loss, John of Austria caught the side of the boat as if to pull himself aboard and suddenly overset it. This put three men struggling in the water with the two Turks striving to subdue their captive. Together they were not a match for their slippery antagonist. He broke away under water and it was more than a further exciting ten minutes before sight was caught of the obstreperous captive by half a dozen small boats patrolling the sea in circles. He was then subdued, picked up and brought ashore.

The fifth man mentioned, held up his lantern and looked into the face of the captive in sheer amazement. "Stubborn as a mule; mean as a tiger; slippery as an eel!" he exclaimed to his eunuchs. "Lock him up!"

This man proved to be Muley. He continued to speak collectedly but rapidly to the guards, bidding them especially to beware of rough-handling the captives; and they were taken back to the bagnio where Muley himself saw that they were brought in.

The remainder of the night was a stormy one for Pedro. Don John in his wrath accused Pedro of having betrayed him, and thoroughly angry, berated him for his easy submission, saying that if both had plunged into the water together, one, at least, would have been certain to escape.

Pedro tried to defend himself. "But, Master, had even one of us escaped a hue and cry would be raised in the morning and our efforts to get away quietly would all have come to naught, would they not?"

Pedro fully expected condign punishment in the morning—he had had experience. To his amazement not a word was said next day. Nor was anything done, save that Muley demanded of Don John why he wanted to run away, and upon receiving an evasive answer, demanded to know whether his fare or his quarters were lacking in what they should be. There being no reasonable complaint on this score, the eunuch continued that it was a mistake to try to escape from the service of the great Pasha: that he was known for his kindness and consideration toward his Christian slaves; but that punishment for a second attempt was certain to be death.

A shift was made in Don John's place at an oar. He was transferred to the first row, where he faced the pavilion. No explanation was given. He surmised the design was to separate him and Pedro; and that no further plots might be hatched for the following night, his sleeping quarters were changed from the bagnio to a single cell-like room in the small prison wing of the

villa itself, usually empty, where household offenders were at times temporarily confined.

As the comforts provided in his new quarters were substantially better than those of the bagnio, the captive, although under close surveillance, did not feel aggrieved at the change. For the Christian slaves, light chains and anklets with which the barge was provided were kept in use as a precaution against the unruly spirit of the pair of disaffected Spaniards, lest it extend to the other captive oarsmen.

These measures being taken, Muley settled down to his routine of duties. Actual punishment for the attempted escape he was reserving, he told Pedro, for the pleasure of the Pasha when he should return from the next of his many raids in the White Sea, as Muley termed the Mediterranean.

"I hope," observed the impudent Pedro to Muley, "he will stay away a long time and have a very successful tour—otherwise, we are sure to catch it."

"He may," retorted Muley with calmness, "decide to even things up for you by taking off your other ear."

"So?" exclaimed Pedro, now apprehensive. "When do you expect him back?"

Miriam proved fond of her luxurious barge—it was a new plaything for a curious child, but one somewhat bored with life—so at least the Pasha's daughter seemed to her Spanish observer who, sitting at his oar in the first bench directly in front of her, perceived plainly her restlessness and not unamiable impatience both with everything surrounding her and whatever could be done for her by devoted servitors.

His curiosity was often aroused as to what her face would look like, were it unveiled. As it was, her veil, sheer, but in ample folds, disclosed only her dark eyes. In his place as a slave the Spaniard was naturally not

supposed to look on his aristocratic and autocratic mistress, and always had a care in stealing glances at her. But her eyes, bright, even keen in expression, seemed when he caught them, attractive though cold and domineering. Her voice, naturally high-pitched but always gentle, was never raised in anger or excitement —nor need it be where servitude was always eager.

One morning the barge being ordered early, Muley appeared to be in a great state of mind, running back and forth between the villa and the pier, casting anxious glances now and again at the sky and consulting with the gray-bearded Moorish boatswain.

While the bargemen were waiting in attendance for orders, baskets of supplies began to arrive from the villa. Pedro learned that a longer trip was in contemplation; Her Highness had decided on visiting the summer island that day. If the weather and the sea were right, the distance was a simple matter; but reasonable precaution was necessary before venturing so far out; it was this that was exercising Muley.

While Pedro was explaining this to Don John, the eunuch could be seen on the flight of steps leading from the villa, conferring with Miriam and apparently protesting against the trip. Waving objection aside, the obdurate girl persisted in her intention and the usual procession started down for the barge. The Spaniards noticed, however, that the little detachment of Janissaries had been increased from four to six.

The day proved perfect. The passage to the Island over waters ruffled by the lightest of breezes was to Don John, even in his captivity at the oar, a recreation. It was pleasing to watch the sails and galleys and fishing craft that dotted the sea—galliot or galley now crossing the barge course, now bearing away to the Dardanelles or toward the Bosphorus.

Picturesque sailing craft bore gracefully down on and away from them. And when the alert eye of the Spaniard wearied of the scene, it could rest itself on the no less beautiful pavilion directly in front of him. In fact, he sat almost like a favored spectator in an orchestra pit with the pageantry of a rare spectacle presented especially for him. The riot of brilliant coloring, the array of comely maids—only one was fat—and as the high light of the picture, the lavishly draped and cushioned couch on which reclined the veiled mistress. Don John had now begun to fashion to himself varying aspects and features of a countenance so uniformly hidden from the eyes of men.

As the barge drew alongside the landing stage, the Island revealed itself this time as a garden landscape in beauty. Slaves of the Pasha had planted the almond, the orange, the citron, the fig, the pomegranate, and a wealth of other fruits; while clumps of trees and flowering shrubs—the hibiscus and the hydrangea—contrasted with the yellow masses of acacia and jasmine blooms and the heavily scented flowers of magnolia and rose tree.

The oarsmen and the guards were refreshed al fresco under a clump of cedars—the Spaniards always sitting well apart, though this was not to Muley's liking. Miriam and her attendants retired for their midday repast to the casino, which stood on an eminence overlooking all sides of the Island. During the siesta hour, the men of the barge were free to do as they pleased.

Don John, roaming alone, discovered a headland guarded by a wooded knoll and well covered with shrubbery. A clump of tamarisks nearest the point encircled a bit of rising ground crowned by a tiny grass plot. And having found this, the Spaniard threw himself on the sward and lay a long time looking up at

the sky. At length he fell asleep. He was roused by the sound of feminine voices, and particularly of one voice; he was already familiar with the high monotones and soft cadences of Miriam's utterance.

Listening, he rose to make his escape, but haste was unnecessary. Two women, Miriam and her favorite maid, Fatima, were walking slowly away along the path that led back through the cedars toward the casino and landing-place; whether he had been seen by them he remained that day in doubt.

The heat of noon having slightly abated, the boatswain's whistle sounded and the barge was headed again at a leisurely pace for the mainland. The heat and humidity together had made all the men sleepy. The Janissaries lounged indolently at the bow, the oarsmen pulled half-heartedly—even the watch-dog, Muley, nodded at his post as the boat took its way across the quiet sea still quite alive with craft of varied sorts.

As the day breeze died down and in the interval before the land breeze sprung up, even Miriam felt the heat despite the steadily moving fans, and pushed her veil a little at a time upward on her forehead and in like manner gradually downward on her cheeks until only the tip of a straight and slender nose and the lower part of her face remained under cover. Don John in brief, stolen glances, could not but observe how completely the receding veil changed the expression of its wearer's eyes. No longer cold and inscrutable, they were revealed as still confident in expression yet declaring unfathomed depths.

Their setting was now better disclosed under curving dark brows which together with the long lashes of the lids, gave them an expression of dignity and womanhood that the Spaniard could hardly reconcile with

sixteen years; and this expression was tempered to-day by just a carefree surrender to the languor of mid-summer heat in an almost tropical clime. Once only her eyes caught the eyes of her Spanish slave. Each was stealing a glance at the other—yet so guardedly that either could have pleaded accident; it was only the haste with which each looked away that betrayed self-consciousness. Both broke the electric current together; but in that brief instant the current had shot a spark from each to the other that was never afterward to die.

The captive, day-dreaming at his oar, chafing at the indignity of his temporary fate, and revolving in his mind ever fresh schemes for achieving some advantage from his enforced stay in the heart of the enemy's empire, had heretofore looked at Miriam but with a head and heart far away; now his curiosity was thoroughly awakened.

From this reverie he was roused by a crash, a chorus of shrieks from the pavilion and angry shouts behind him that were punctured by the sharp crack of pistols.

Hardly able to believe his ears, Don John sprang up in his seat and looked around to the bow. Even then, his first thought was that the barge had been accidentally stemmed by a galley hitherto unnoticed but now pressing on the port quarter. He was speedily undeceived when he heard more shots and saw armed men attempting to board the barge. Another fleeting surmise was quickly dispelled. Could these be Christians in an insane foray in the sea of Marmora? But hardly a second glance was needed to show him the barge was being attacked by Turks.

CHAPTER XXXVI

UPROAR

The clash of steel, the rattle of musketry, and the whistling of arrows instantly changed the peace of the barge into a scene of battle.

The gray-bearded boatswain, pierced by an arrow, fell in the gangway close to Don John at the moment that the Spanish captive was struggling to get rid of his leg chain.

Reaching toward the dying man, Don John jerked from his girdle the anklet keys and amid the confusion and uproar, tried to free himself. In his haste, he failed to work the key, and rising in a rage tore at the chain until the staple gave way and left him to drag the chain after him. He tossed the keys to the already frantic Pedro and surveyed the struggle at the bow as the warhorse sniffs the smoke of battle.

From the pavilion, just behind him, a chorus of cries and shrieks from the women assailed his ears. There was no fighting man who could be spared to protect them, and like frightened lambs they were trying to run into the fight instead of out of it.

Don John, no stranger to the music ahead, had never before seen women dancing to it, and his first thought was to get them back and clear the scene for action. It was like driving a flock of hens, to push, pull and urge, with shouts and pantomime, a dozen women into the pavilion cabin where they would be momentarily safe from arrows and musket balls. He was finishing

this active and hurried task when he saw Miriam, who stood like a statue directly back of her couch looking at him. If she were frightened, she gave no evidence of it. He hastened to her, and continuing his pantomime of looks and gestures, begged her to go into the cabin.

She took his animation coolly, nor could he push or pull the Pasha's daughter as he could her maids. But she spoke to him rapidly and pointed with evident anger at the fierce fighting going on forward. It was as if she would defy her assailants, but her words were Greek to Don John. All this time he had realized that he was completely unarmed; but in the hand of the dead boatswain he now espied a broken scimitar, and this he caught up hastily to do what he could. Pedro had grabbed an oar; and reckoning that any fight was a good fight for them—that a hopeless state could not be made worse—the two men aided lustily in the defence of the barge.

It was only when Don John had caught up the almost useless scimitar from the Moor's hand that Miriam's whole manner and expression changed. She plucked at his sleeve and with a rapid fire of strange words motioned him to follow as she ran toward the cabin. Looking around to be sure he was following close, she stopped for him to fasten the cabin door behind them and pushed her way through the chorus of shrieking attendants to her inner room, Don John still at her pattering heels. Running to a chest, she threw back the lid, fell on her knees and with incredible swiftness threw scarves, shawls and wraps to the floor, right and left, and drew out a scimitar with a jeweled hilt. The Spaniard caught the scimitar grip from her hand with amazed eyes and a startled suddenness.

So stern, so black was his face at that moment that

she looked at him in fear. Was he friend or enemy now? His eye caught an inscription in good French on the shining blade: "To Ali, bravest of the brave; from Charles of France."

"From a villain," exclaimed the Spaniard, who hated the Medicis. He sprung the blade quickly back and forth. "But the steel is good," he muttered. A grateful smile toward Miriam as he cut the air with the weapon, reassured her—he could not, she knew instinctively, be her enemy.

From the cabin came the crash of blows that were battering the outer door. Miriam's mind and his seemed now to work swiftly together. He was about to run back to the fray when her cry checked him. Turning, he saw her holding out a pair of like-jewelled pistols. Nodding, he thrust them into his belt before stepping back into the cabin.

The terrified women were redoubling their cries—and screaming words he could not understand: "The pirates! The pirates!" And before he could take another step, Muley—sword in hand—fought by a tall, active brute, whose eyes were hidden by a domino, lurched backward into the room, resolved to defend his mistress with his life. Streaming with blood, the plucky little lala, resisting desperately, endeavored to hold off an antagonist from whose blade he could not long hope to escape with life.

From Miriam, as the pirate overbore her defender, now escaped the first cry that Don John had heard from her. Something in it roused him to a frenzy of anger. He caught the faithful eunuch by the shoulder and jerked him to one side, just as the pirate aimed at him a blow that would have severed his sword arm from his shoulder. Then the half-naked Spaniard, as he flung the eunuch away, faced the pirate captain.

It was the first time the Spanish swordsman had confronted death with a scimitar. But had he been certain the pistols were primed, it is unlikely he would have drawn one. The swordsman of his day exulted in the clash of ringing steel and the spurt of blood that followed the master thrust.

Enraged to find himself balked at the very moment of his triumph, the masked man lunged forward to cut down the youth who with a chain dragging at his leg, defied him. But despite the strangeness of his weapon, the Hapsburg adventurer liked it. Not only was the blade good, the balance was good—the blade led well forward and the point was admirable for the cutting blow it was meant to deliver. In a fight with scimitars, the nimble foot would count for much, since one downward blow well placed would end all.

Handicapped though he was by the clattering anklet, the Spaniard proved equal to his antagonist and without giving ground—there was little in truth to give—fought defensively and warily till he should know what sword language the pirate spoke.

A more intimate and rapid acquaintance with this was not reassuring. The enemy had all the resources of a master and kept Don John dodging the vicious swing of a long, swift arm. The two men clashing ferociously, jumped with rapid and resounding footfalls and quick breaths about the room—Muley wholly disabled, and Miriam, watching, fascinated.

Drawn to fullest height against the cabin wall, bosom breathlessly raised, arms straight out from her shoulders and with palms and fingers flattened against the satinwood panels as if to cling to them, she stood rigidly, fiercely at bay. Face blanched, nostrils dilated and with eyes blazing, she marked the struggle for her honor and her life.

Only one advantage Don John had over his assailant: he was fresh; the pirate had already fought hard to reach the goal of his hopes in the bit of youthful femininity behind the captive.

"Yield you!" cried the angry marauder in Turkish. But the Spaniard understood nothing of the command and wasted not a jot of breath to answer: the more the pirate stormed, the better his enemy liked it.

"Yield! Take quarter!" cried the pirate. But Muley, shrinking on the side line, was conceiving a shrewd idea of the capacity of his slender champion. "Take quarter yourself!" cried Muley in fierce Turkish retort. "You'll need it."

The two men fought savagely. But Muley was right in foreseeing peril to the pirate. Reckless with rage the aggressor leaped forward and threw his whole strength into a chopping blow that would have cloven Don John's skull had he not sprung from it. As it was, the point of the scimitar slashing the Spaniard's left arm left the dominoed man for an instant unguarded. In that fraction of a second, the Spaniard brought down a counter stroke which, glancing from the pirate's ear, sunk into his shoulder. He sank to one knee. The domino slipped over his eyes. He tore it away as he recovered his feet—and to Don John's amazement, revealed the broken nose and scarred face of the renegado, de Castro, whom he had marked so long ago. But whatever the renegado's discomforture, he could not have recognized the man who had brought him to his knees: Don John was too much disguised by his stain and his garments to be known by his best friend.

Loath to administer a coup-de-grace in the circumstances, Don John gave him an instant to regain his balance. Muley intervened. He checked Don John

and in his own tongue reviled the pirate, who, seeing himself practically at the mercy of his antagonist, backed out through the screaming women in the cabin and hotly pursued by the purpled blade of the Pasha, retreated to the deck and jumped aboard the pirate galley as its survivors hastily made ready to row away.

But the fight had gone badly on the barge for the six Janissaries: three were wounded and three would never fight again. Two of the Venetians who had managed to free themselves with the keys from Pedro had caught up the scimitars of the dead Janissaries and fought pluckily, but both were wounded. It was no discredit to the Pasha's men. They had had to do with twenty seasoned cutthroats.

When Don John, pursuing their captain, gained the gangway, Pedro, assailed by three of the pirate crew, and bleeding profusely, was waging an unequal fight against them with no more than a clubbed musket. One hardy Venetian alone remained to help him. The sight was more than Don John could stand. He gave over pursuit of the fleeing pirate captain and jumped in to turn the tide of battle for Pedro. Thus reinforced, the three of the barge drove off the last assailant and cleared their vessel's deck. The pirate galley, heedless of the frenzied Pedro's taunting yells, was now pulling rapidly away.

"Some of my old friends in that bunch," exclaimed Pedro, gritting his teeth.

"That's like Messina," said Don John, still breathing fast. "Muley's pretty well cut up," he added, and then pointed to those of the badly scared oarsmen who were huddling on their benches. "Get those rabbits to help clean the deck, do what you can for the wounded, and throw the dead overboard."

Muley was calling from the open cabin door. "He

wants you," explained Pedro to his companion. Don John walked back. As he stepped from the gangway up to the pavilion, Muley, to his astonishment, greeted him with a profound Oriental salaam, pointed to the battered cabin door and as Don John advanced, followed him within.

The fluttering slave women, quieted, looked hard at the slashed raiment and bleeding torso of the Spaniard, still dragging his leg-chain. Muley pointed to the open door of Miriam's apartment. Don John hesitated. Some sense of his undeniably repellent appearance seemed to forbid his entering the presence of the Pasha's daughter. He turned to Muley to ask in the Lingua Franca jargon, and in pantomime, leave to retire and cleanse and bandage his wound; but Muley urged him on. At the same moment he caught sight of Miriam within her room bidding him with insistent gestures to enter.

She stood erect and in no wise dismayed, her face still white, her eyes fairly burning. The first movement she made was to point to the Spaniard's leg-chain. "Take that hideous chain off. Never let me see it there again!" she said coldly to Muley.

The eunuch started in surprise and ran to find a key. Miriam, without a word or a smile, stepped toward her slave. He bowed low to her, his vanity not quite dead, and extended to her the bloody hilt of the scimitar she had given him. She completely ignored the gesture. "Your arm," she said in excellent Turkish and in that voice of cool and misty tone that had grown agreeably on his ear. "You are bleeding terribly," she added, as if he understood every word instead of none; then with a nervous shade of sympathy: "And we have no bandages! What shall we do? Stop!" She closed the door and looking away from him, hastily unwound the

harem veil from her face. She tore it into two lengthwise strips. One fell to the floor. With the other she turned and held out her hand to take his bleeding arm.

For the first time he saw Miriam's face. Its strange beauty staggered the disordered courtier. The straight, proud nose with its chiseled nostrils; and the curving lips of a beautiful woman—one who could command or could obey. No smile warmed her face; but it was a face for which a man would go far to coax a smile.

With deft hands she rapidly bound the slashed arm. Still surprised, Don John could not keep his eyes off the beauty revealed so close. The sphinx-like girl doing her best to aid him, proved aware of his unguarded gaze. Without even raising her eyes she lifted her left hand from her task and laying her fingers against his cheek, pressed his face quite away from her and resumed her bandaging as if nothing had happened.

The collected, matter-of-fact way in which she did this, was too much for Don John's reserve. Something of his reckless youth woke again into life. He gradually brought his head back to where, ostensibly watching the bandaging, he could bring Miriam's serious features into the range of vision. This time she looked straight at him. His breath caught in his throat as he saw the depth of her gaze, but she spoke to him in reproach. "You are not in the least grateful for what I am doing."

He could not understand; but neither could he misunderstand the import of her words. In mock penitence he looked away.

CHAPTER XXXVII

FEVER

In the morning, Muley sent for the two Spaniards. Ali's surgeon had come out from the palace to the villa the night before and dressed the wounds of the survivors, including Muley. From the number of bandaged men about the place, the villa bagnio looked a hospital.

"It would take long to tell you all that was behind this attack yesterday," said the master of the household calmly to Don John, in Lingua Franca. He was sitting in his own quarters, and his visitors sat before him. "You have wondered, of course, how the daughter of the most powerful of the vizier pashas could be viciously attacked so close to home——"

Pedro opened his eyes. "That pirate was after the girl!" he observed, trying to wag his one good ear.

Muley nodded gravely. "I should explain, first, that our master built this villa for Miriam's mother, who disliked the city palace and the atmosphere of the harem. In her own country, Albania, from which she was taken in childhood, she was a princess in her own right, and the line of her house exists now only in Miriam. When her mother died, our master reserved this villa for Miriam herself; and his harem remains at the city palace.

"Afterward, our master married a sister of the Sultan, by whom he had two sons, Ahmed Bey and Mahomet Bey. They live at the palace, with their tutor;

their mother is dead. Ali Pasha is not a Turk; he is of a noble house of the Kabarda Circassians.

"And now I must speak frankly to you both, because I feel you have deserved to understand. Our Sovereign Ruler, Selim—and what I say would cost me my head, if bandied about—is unhappily less interested in the affairs of the glorious empire, left him by his great father Solyman, than he is in women. Certain of the vicious creatures who surround him play upon his weaknesses—to his country's undoing and his own. Of the worst of these are two: an infamous Portugese Jew—Nassy—and a new one, an equally infamous Spanish renegado—who attacked us yesterday.

"Last year this man came here to the villa with an escort, bearing a confidential message from the Sultan to Ali Pasha. Owing to a blunder, he was ushered into the private apartments of the Pasha before being summoned. The Pasha was conferring with his daughter Miriam, who, before her father, stood unveiled. The renegado, through this mischance, caught sight of her.

"Having learned, from the scoundrel, of the loveliness of the child of the noble Pasha's household, Selim —degenerate son of a great father—expressed a wish for her—so our master's spies have reported to us—and this, the renegado resolved to gratify.

"Within a month afterward, masked men tried to steal Miriam—our Rose of the Morning—from these gardens. Later, an attempt was made in the streets of the city to poniard her guards and abduct her; both these attempts, Allah be praised, failed.

"This explains the presence here of Janissaries—men devoted to her father. I suspect, since you unmasked him yesterday, that this renegado has been behind all of these attacks"—he addressed Don Juan;

"I am almost sure of it. But never before yesterday did he assemble such a force of cutthroats to work his end. And but for the timely aid of two infidel slaves—strangers—" he inclined his head to both, "we had been undone. Ali Pasha," he added, "is not ungrateful. Ask for whatever you want and it shall be yours."

"If I may have whatever I want," said Don John drily, "I should like a razor to get some of this beard off my chin."

"How soon do you expect His Highness back?" asked Pedro.

"In due time," answered Muley, cryptically, if not satisfactorily. "But you shall both have a greater measure of liberty; be sure, only, not to abuse it. To escape is impossible, therefore make no attempts."

"What I should like to do," suggested Don John emboldened by the eunuch's friendly demeanor, "is to have a small boat, with Pedro. We could supply the villa and the palace with fish. And we should like to be allowed to sell our surplus—for we are hard-working fishermen—to the men at the navy yard or the sailors of the fleet."

"That, too, we shall see about," promised Muley. "Meantime, I have other plans. You—" he spoke to Don John, "I appoint for the present, captain of the barge. You—" he addressed Pedro, "I appoint boatswain. You will both have better quarters—each his own room and better food—although," the eunuch interrupted himself to say, "you have both been well cared for."

"Pertau Pasha, commander of our land forces, is sending a new detachment of Janissaries for the barge to-day," he continued. "When they come, I go to the city to report to Sokolli, the grand vizier, the outrage of yesterday. While I speak with the premier, do you

two repair to the slave market for the oarsmen we shall need. When I return, we will buy such slaves as you select."

Muley rose; the interview was at an end.

By afternoon, the barge had been freshened up, and all traces of the fight of the day before removed. Shortly after the arrival of the new Janissaries, Miriam appeared with her retinue of attendants; and with Don John as master of the vessel, the barge was headed for the city.

Landing, Muley and his assistants directed the procession headed for the grand vizier; and the Spaniards, with the Venetian, started for the slave market. With Pedro doing most of the talking, the three looked the market possibilities over, and after much discussion and barter with the owners, selected eligible-looking subjects to fill in the barge vacancies.

By Don John's order, Pedro questioned very closely the slaves picked out. He asked each one particularly of what country he was, and whether he had ever done any fighting, explaining that the service was somewhat hazardous, but that the master treated his men uncommonly well. In the end, they had two men from Cyprus—Cypriots; a stout-bodied Sicilian; and two Spanish sailors. All of these declared they could, in an emergency, give an account of themselves.

The two useful captives were now well cared-for and Pedro, particularly, had no complaint. He had comfortable quarters, little to do, good food in abundance and best of all, an old pack of Spanish cards—for Pedro was a shrewd gamester and had trimmed Muley himself in casual games of chance.

His princely companion, brooding over his loss of liberty, and the miscarriage of his adventure in the

East, and now, his failure to get closer to the naval secrets of the enemy—did much pacing about of his quarters, so ample and comfortable as to forestall complaint; and sending of messages to Muley, reminding him of his promise about the navy yard: to which importunities the imperturbable eunuch always returned the same word: "Patience."

Probably no word in language was harder of import for the younger and hotter-blooded son of Charles V to swallow. He summoned his fortitude and his scant store of philosophy to his aid—these were of little avail. He recalled every scrap of every tale he had ever heard as a boy from the lips of Doña Magdalena, of the trials of princes in adversity,—the immortal Cid, in disgrace and cruel banishment; Richard of the Lion Heart, basely imprisoned by Duke Leopold; Alfred, burning the cakes of the cowherd; Bruce in the spider's cave; and compared them with his own unlucky plight.

Still he fussed and fumed, and as Muley put it, fumed himself into a fever, and, to use Muley's words, a fine one. The kitchen slave bringing his breakfast one morning found him tossing and muttering on his couch. And when the noble captive perceived the pacific scullion with his meal, he made at him in a fury and as if, with an imaginary sword, to run him through. The frightened boy dropped his tray and scudded for safety. He reported to the fourth cook, who informed the third cook, who notified the second cook, who salaamed the startling news to the first cook, who despatched word to the chief eunuch that the young Spaniard in the prison wing had gone crazy.

Greatly exercised, Muley, with two assistants, hurried to Don John and found him, indeed, delirious. Realizing how any disaster to his charge would react on him, Muley did all humanly possible by summoning

the Pasha's wise old surgeon at once. Upon getting his diagnosis, the eunuch sought his mistress' apartments and reported all to her. Knowing her feminine interest in her recent champion, Muley gave as favorable an account as he could of his condition, but did not minimize the fact that the surgeon pronounced him a sick man.

This situation reversed the fretting. Miriam had felt quite composed in mind after the thwarted attack on her person; now, she was upset at the prospect of losing the hardy captain of her barge, under whose care she had felt she might enjoy security.

The budding daughter of the fiery Ali was, herself, very much a stranger to patience. She wrestled all of what seemed the endless day with her feelings. At dusk she sent for Muley to learn of the day in the sickroom; he reported no change. Miriam dismissed him and walked alone out into the garden.

The garden was warm and still. From its orange blossoms rose a languorous sweetness. It wooed the night air and like lotus, invited it to dreams. The moon was peering above the eastern horizon, and from the waves of the peaceful Marmora came a gentle lapping on the beach. On the sea, she heard the faint sound of voices, as fisher folk sought their way to distant grounds. Under a cedar, Miriam stood looking at the silver trail of the moon across the waters, thinking for the moment of her long-absent father. In a clump of azalea near by, a heart-hungry nightingale suddenly throbbed a full-throated appeal to his mate, and recalling the thoughts of its maiden listener from her father, filled her with strange unrest. Wander where she would and banish thought as she would, everything in the night seemed to reproach her for being alone in the midst of its beauty and repose.

Suddenly resolved, she turned in the path, started swiftly for her apartment, summoned her favorite maid, Fatima, and despatched her for Muley.

The eunuch bowed low before her. Miriam spoke without hesitation. "Muley, take me to the sick slave," she said quietly.

He opened his eyes. "Rose of the Morning!" he exclaimed in amazement. "It is not fitting that Your Highness should visit an infidel slave, sick or well."

"Muley, I knew what you would say," she returned, undisturbed. "You bind me too straightly with your rules and etiquettes. I am not a child——"

"So much the worse."

"Worse for me, yes—and worse for my faithful Muley," she added cajolingly. "But you must bear with me as you have always borne—not cross me. Take me to the sick slave."

"You forget—you are a princess—this man, a giaour——"

"He saved your life—and mine."

"He has been and shall be rewarded. But this—it is not fitting," persisted Muley.

"Nor is it fitting that giaour—who fought for us—should die."

"Would your visiting cure him?"

"No," returned Miriam, tossing her head with defiance, "but it might cure me; I am anxious."

"You shall not go," declared Muley sternly.

"But," retorted Miriam, unmoved, "I am going. If I must go alone, you are to blame."

"You have no key—" exclaimed the eunuch.

"That will not delay me long," she rejoined cryptically.

Poor Miriam, in a quandary, was thinking fast. Muley knew his ward's stubbornness and, what was

more perplexing, her resourcefulness—it was difficult, he knew from experience, to balk her without inflicting strict confinement on her; and this, her father had never looked on with favor. Miriam was too much a reminder of a young Albanian wife very dear to him, whom he had lost while he was at sea, through the harshness of attendants at home.

Muley fought for a time—tried to procrastinate; and losing all points, miserably consented that, accompanied by Fatima and himself, she might look in on the sick man.

The three, provided with tapers, set out for the east wing. In the darkness of the prison chamber, Don John lay tossing. Miriam, standing close, saw how flushed were his features, how dry his parted lips. She began to give orders. Everything was wrong—the pallet unfit; an attendant was needed; cooling applications must be administered whenever the sick man woke.

Within a brief interval, Pedro had been routed out, the pallet of the sick man replaced with a couch, the doctor brought in again, refreshment provided, medicines added. Miriam, when satisfied, returned with Fatima to her own apartments.

While her gallant captain lay ill, she waited each evening until darkness shrouded her from curious eyes, even those of her patient, and carefully veiled, walked with Fatima to the sick room. When Muley stormed and finally set a guard to stop her, Miriam searched her father's apartment and found the keys she needed for the prison wing. When the guard retired at daybreak, the watchful Fatima called her mistress and she made her visit at dawning and sat, at times—while Pedro snored on the pallet—studying while he slept, the features, drawn by fever, of her strange defender.

But her solicitude had at least transformed indifference to his condition into active care; and sooner than she would have believed it possible, he was reported on the way to recovery.

This news brought about a curious reaction on Miriam. As maidens love to plan and dream, Miriam realized only then how much her daily existence had become bound up in these stolen visits to her sick slave.

The memory of one lasted the rest of the day; at night she looked forward—as she closed her eyes to dream of that day on the barge and call up again the vision of that deadly combat hardly at arms-length from her—to the hour of dawn when she should steal with Fatima to see how her blue-eyed captain fared.

He was now so nearly well that she decided she dared no longer visit his room—lest he discover her; and she notified Fatima not to wake her next morning.

But while she wooed her pillow that night in vain, for sleep, something pleaded persistently with her for one last visit at break of day—it seemed so hard to give up those stolen moments. The longer she threw herself from side to side on her couch, the stronger grew the desire to see him once more.

She needed no one to wake her toward morning, for she slept as lightly as a cat. At the very breaking of day she rose, dressed, secured her keys and tiptoeing through Fatima's room, stole down the dark corridor, across to the east wing, unlocked the great door, passed through and locked it behind her; and making her way to the entrance to the sick room, stealthily inserted the key in the lock of the door. Surely no lovelier thief ever stole upon an unsuspecting sleeper than this never-daunted daughter of the Kabardas.

The rude lock creaked as she carefully turned the key; but Pedro snored heavily and Miriam stepped into

the room undetected. Shooting through the two east windows, the first arrows of the day warned her that her stay must be short. The low couch of her prisoner stood opposite the larger of these windows and the early light touched his face. Bending over him, she saw that his sunken cheeks were filling out and that the hollows under his eyes were disappearing. His reddish-brown hair fell in a tumble across his forehead and his lips, no longer parted with fever, closed with a firmness that from the beginning had enlisted her curiosity.

Each moment grew sweeter to Miriam than the last, because the strengthening light brought him more clearly to her. One hand lay at his side; the other, across his breast. Of what was this tall, slender giaour dreaming, Miriam wondered, as she listened to his deep, regular breathing. She must, she knew, steal away. Yet she lingered, for each breath was music to her eager ears and she liked to think it was her solicitude that had brought him back from the grave of indifference which so often closed over a sick slave.

A great snore of Pedro's broke suddenly into a gasp. Like a startled bird, Miriam looked around to see whether he had awakened; but his regular breathing the next moment reassured her. She turned again and bent over her captain for a final look. As she did so, she perceived to her consternation his eyes, wide open, looking directly up into hers. Her heart stopped beating; confusion overwhelmed her. She was too stunned to move.

But the filmy tenderness in her eyes that she could not at once manage to hide betrayed her. The next moment his arms, despite her swift resistance, had drawn her to him and he had pressed his lips to her own.

No frightened fawn ever sprang so quick from danger. With both hands she pushed against his breast and tore herself away. On his face she saw only a wan smile. Overcome, she hid her startled face in her hands, darted toward the door, and without stopping to close it behind her, incontinently fled.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

NEW HORIZONS

Not until, pale and panting for breath, she had shut herself in her own room, could she collect her thoughts; and then it was only to realize in an almost fainting panic that when she had left her room so blithely she had neglected to veil herself—on the cushions before her, lay the accusing yashmak. It was the last stroke to compass her humiliation.

She threw herself on her bed and buried her offending face deep in her pillow. But her thoughts would not be buried. Her mind was in a whirl that constantly reverted to that terrible moment. Her lips that his lips had touched, burned; she could not shut from her closed eyes the image of his eyes looking into hers; his unpardonable rudeness; his taking advantage of her errand of solicitude for his welfare; the shameful blow he had given her pride—these and a hundred other thoughts crowded one upon another. At times she felt, her cheeks tingling with resentment, that his conduct should be punished—but how? She dared not tell the truth. And to accuse him falsely? That would be too base. After all, she was much the more to blame. If her father knew, he would not alone punish her with terrible severity; he would strike off the giaour's head.

But dismissing these angry thoughts, she could and would show her displeasure at his shocking audacity and teach him, by her aloofness, how offensive his conduct had been.

Muley had decided to use the Pasha's pleasure galley for Miriam's sea trips. It was luxuriously appointed, well equipped for defence and capable of carrying three times as many fighting men.

To the command of this craft Don John was called when he got abroad again—which was not long after Miriam's contretemps. Sokolli having no stomach for a quarrel about pirates with the Empire's dreaded warrior, Ali, gave Muley what he asked for, a detail of twenty picked Janissaries for the galley; and the Spanish refugee found himself at the head of an ample Turkish crew and a score of fighting men in a galley he should have liked to call his own.

Miriam took no part in the preparations made for her excursions. She developed an indifference to the sea, spent her time in the seclusion of her quarters; and for diversion, turned to her household servitors and indulged her passionate fondness for music.

This diversion soon failed her; music she found was not only a poor substitute for an interesting slave, but actually fed the fires of her desire to see him again. The bevy of feminine musicians was retained, but they were ordered to the galley. What the demure minx perhaps had in mind was to try the effect of music on the tantalizing slave himself.

One fine morning word came from the villa to Don John that Her Moslem Highness was making ready for a visit to the Island and that all was to be put in trim to receive her with fitting ceremony. The occasion proved worthy of it. The procession from the villa to the pier was the most colorful the Spaniard had yet seen. Miriam had increased the number of her attendants and added Oriental riches to the ensemble of her retinue that challenged afresh the admiration of the galley slave.

First came the captain of the Janissaries, proudly adorned, followed by his nineteen picturesque butchers, two and two, in gala fighting trim. Then Moorish eunuchs, carrying harps, and behind them, Miriam's feminine musicians—picturesquely clad, and bearing citerns and lutes. Then a great number of her maids, richly appareled; four stalwart blacks, their skins glistening in the sun, followed. These bore a canopy under which Miriam walked, in her filmy white, with Muley close at hand, dancing attendance on her, and two black pages in velvet waving large standards of plumes to ward off from their mistress any impertinent flies. Next, came ten Nubian gelts in striking livery, each leading an Irish greyhound in leash, these —gelts and dogs—a present to Ali Pasha from the French Ambassador; the dogs were being taken to the Island for the summer.

As captain, it devolved on Don John to receive Her Highness at the galley steps. As she approached, speaking with Fatima, the accents of silvery mist that made her voice so familiar, fell again pleasingly on his ear. His salaam would have done honor to a rigid Oriental training; it was profound.

But the Princess, as Muley termed her—and by right of descent she was—carefully veiled and walking with stiffly measured steps, apparently failed to see her gallant captain; at all events, she passed him unnoticed; perhaps she was too deeply engaged in converse with her maid.

Pedro, as boatswain, resplendent in his new office, really did the honors, for he awkwardly steadied her up the carpeted steps to her pavilion on the poop deck. And the curious assemblage of guests, slaves and marines, was put aboard and variously disposed of.

As captain, John of Austria took his place behind

the pavilion and two steps higher; the pavilion space was more circumscribed than on the pleasure barge, since the galley had not been built with a view to entertaining ladies.

Aside from a possible strain upon the feelings of the chief officer and of the chief guest, the day itself was enjoyable. Blue waters, a rippling breeze and a cloudless sky. To the strains of soft music, the galley stood out to sea propelled by the oars alone. Miriam appeared somewhat restless ámid her surrounding and where John stood he could hear her voice though he could not understand. Some discussion between herself and Fatima seemed to be going on: Muley was at the prow speaking with the captain of the Janissaries.

At length Fatima stopped the music and turning from her mistress looked toward Don John and asked him in pantomime to step down to where Miriam reclined among her pillows.

The Spaniard, bowing low, stood before the mistress of the galley.

It was a moment before she spoke; and then hesitatingly in Lingua Franca, and looking out at sea, not at him.

"You do not speak our language," she remarked, choosing her words as if unaccustomed to Lingua Franca.

He answered her in the same speech. "I am sorry that I do not, Your Highness," he managed to return, awkwardly, but apparently fairly well at home in the polyglot tongue.

"I wish you to learn it," she said not looking at him, and with the indifference of an autocrat. "I do not wish to give orders in this jargon," she added in disdainful conclusion.

Don John bowed in silence, but still stood at attention.

"I am told you are a fisherman," she remarked, after making him stand a long moment. He bowed again.

"Of what country?" As Miriam asked this question she turned slightly and for the first time looked through her veil directly at him.

"I am an Arnaut, Your Highness."

"Are all Arnaut fishermen ill-mannered?" She shot the implication of his daybreak rudeness at him suddenly.

He maintained his poise. "In my youth," he answered quietly, "I lived for a time as page in a great house. Unfortunately, I have been long at sea and have forgotten much of my early training."

"Why, on this beautiful morning," she asked after a long and cold pause, and with a faint note of complaint, "do you use the oars and not the sails?"

He knew better than to attempt to explain. "They shall go up at once, Your Highness," was all he said.

He had been testing out his crew to see what they could do at the oars, in case of emergency; but Her Highness' wishes prevailed. Pedro's whistle sounded and the sails, as they bellied out to the breeze, added color and beauty to an already beautiful scene.

Miriam listened to the music for a time, looked about the sea at the various craft within sight, and presently sent again for her captain.

"Are we safe from pirates in this galley?" she asked as he stood by her.

"Much safer than Your Highness was in the barge," he answered diplomatically.

"But if we are attacked?"

He smiled and said with a slight shrug of his shoulders, "I hope we should give a better account of ourselves than before."

"I think my father will say we gave a *very* good account of ourselves," she remarked coolly, "since we were surprised, and by a greater force. Are there pirates in your country?"

Reclining on her cushions, she was supporting herself on her elbow and looking at him with dreamy, half-closed eyes.

Her captain smiled slightly and answered in effect: "No end!"

"Did you fight them?"

"Sometimes."

"Do they attack fishermen?"

"Frequently. They carry off men, women and children."

"They might carry away your wife while you are captive!"

"Your Highness, I have no fears."

"No fears?"

"I have never married."

"Keep a close lookout for pirates to-day, please."

He bowed and Miriam looked up at the sails as if the interview were at an end. But her captain not having been dismissed, remained at attention.

It was not long before she turned to him to ask a question. And she held him in desultory talk at her side until he ventured to say he ought to be at his post above, as they were now reaching the waters in which they had been attacked before.

"I have often heard my father say these miscreants never attack twice in the same place," observed Her Highness composedly. "I do not believe they will be

out to-day. When and where did you fight with pirates in your own country?"

Again she was regarding him with a measure of curiosity: and in turn Don John was beginning to realize the great Admiral's daughter was a remarkable child: at least—as he had reason to know—one sure of herself under even terrifying conditions; and mistress of herself in all others—but one.

He gave her such accounts as he could of minor brushes with Moorish marauders, choosing those of a less exciting nature.

Miriam listened with grave attention; but the remarks she interposed indicated that she quite knew what she was talking about. She had profited, evidently, by her close relationship to the greatest sea fighter of the Mediterranean.

The stay at the Island was short. Going home, she again defied possible assailants by engaging her captain in converse much of the time. When neither of them could find the right word, signs came into play. The effort to convey their meanings in this wise, one to another, grew more interesting and intimate than if words had been as plentiful as blackberries. Don John went to sleep that night stimulated by the day's contact with what seemed a remarkable girl.

Once broken, the ice suffered fast. Every day brought its adventures and mistress and captive made commendable progress both in Lingua Franca and in still more agreeable pantomime—the pantomime that engaged the appeal of the eye, the eloquence of slender hands, graceful fingers, jewelled wrists, white, half-revealed arms, and the animation of a fervent wish to impart. All this, of course, called for corresponding concentration on the part of the pupil—blue eyes bent earnestly upon brown eyes, and pleasing features re-

laxing into laughter that coaxed laughter from the teacher over real or feigned stupidity.

"But you will never learn Turkish, Muley says," declared Miriam one day after fruitless attempts to enlighten her neophyte. "I suppose we must stick to this jargon to understand each other—what do you think?"

It always settled differences quicker, and was always pleasanter, to agree than to disagree—and her captain agreed.

One day, accompanied by Fatima, Muley and a bevy of maids and eunuchs carrying carpets and cushions, fans and sunshades, Miriam took her way with her guard, the giaour captain, through a succession of orange and lemon groves to a distant headland of the Island. The shore line was marked by a stretch of low cliffs rising abruptly from the long beach. Clumps of pomegranates, figs, almonds and lowspreading shrubs were so placed as to surround a small grass-covered plot on the extreme point. Indeed, it was a spot Don John had already found for himself. Here, rugs and cushions were scattered, sunshades spread about, refreshment provided to await the pleasure of Miriam.

The morning was clear. A north wind lent tonic to the air and ruffled the sea just enough to touch it with nightcaps. Below the headland, breakers rolled lazily up the far-spreading sands where the redoubtable Pasha was accustomed to bring his guests for sea bathing.

When all had been arranged to Muley's satisfaction, an eloquent maid undertook to divert her mistress with one of those richly embroidered Oriental tales on which Eastern women, denied the many sources of diversion open to their Western sisters, must feed their starving romantic fancies.

Miriam, if she listened with an effort, maintained a

commendable patience. When the story-telling was done, refreshments were served—of which Don John, who with Muley had only hovered on the edge of the scene, was invited to partake. The women, save Fatima, were then sent in charge of Muley, back to the casino.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE AWAKENING

A RESTLESS spirit seemed to animate Miriam as she stood with Fatima on the edge of the cliff looking down on the foamy waves crawling in, breaking and spreading over the white sands.

"Fatima," she said, "I want to go down to the sands."

"Impossible."

"Why impossible?" demanded Miriam. "There is a path down the cliff."

"A path for monkeys, not for women."

"But Fatima, I have been down more than once," remonstrated Miriam.

"When you were a child. Now—you would break your neck."

"No, no. Let's try it," coaxed her mistress.

"Your Highness," protested the maid. "Look at me! I am fat. I shall tumble. If you command me I must go. Bury me decently beside my poor mother in Basra."

Miriam burst into a peal of laughter. It reached Don John's ears as he stood apart with folded arms and silent, gazing at the distant capital of the Turkish Empire—the Empire he so longed to see humbled and beaten into the dust.

"Fatima," exclaimed her mistress reproachfully, "I want to go only for a minute—just to feel the wind-

spray on my cheeks as I used to. But I shall not force my faithful Fatima. Do you remain here. If my captain won't go with me, I shall go alone."

Over Fatima's protest she called to Don John. He bowed. Of course he would take her; but like Fatima he warned against the venture.

She laughed at her captain. "It was my duty to caution you," he said gravely. "But—let us go!"

Fatima spoke low to Miriam. "Have a care. If your father knows, you will surely die—so will *he*."

Miriam retorted with humorous spirit. "Likewise, my faithful Fatima; likewise, Muley. Go! But seal your eyes and pour wax in your ears. See nothing, hear nothing, know nothing. Go, Fatima."

The Spaniard heard, and partly understood, for Miriam made no effort to speak apart.

In a few minutes, with some scrambling down treacherous footing, some help from her captain, without screams but with an occasional exclamation, the reckless girl pluckily followed her guide.

Half way down he found a rock chimney-opening, and by clinging to a stout grapevine, brought his charge without accident to within six or eight feet of the beach floor. Swinging down the intervening space, Don John held out his arms and signalled Miriam to jump. For a moment she hesitated; then summoning courage she sprang from the narrow ledge on which she stood and dropped into his arms.

It was a momentary thrill for both. Miriam released herself quickly and still breathing rather fast from their exertion they looked up at the chimney and for the first time laughed, unabashed, into each other's eyes.

Whirling from him, Miriam ran to a sunny sand-carpeted cove among the rocks and sitting down motioned her captain to sit beside her. With a running

banter in Lingua Franca she told him of Fatima's warning. She spoke further of her father and how he loved her and how she loved him; but when he was away, her life, surrounded only by servants and slaves, was very lonely.

As she sat half-musing, she caught up and cupped the dry sand in her hands and holding it let it run slowly through her fingers.

Her captain smiled at her. He was studying the wilful girl intently; studying her with fast-growing sympathetic interest. Innocent, evidently, as in childhood, yet filled with emotions of adolescence. Simple, yet imperious. Autocratic, yet light-hearted. He watched her as one might watch the playful kitten of a panther, not knowing what it might do next; a youngling filled with more strength and pregnant with more possibilities than she herself, or any other, could as yet realize.

He pointed to her cupped hands as the sand trickled through them. "So life runs away—" he managed to say, "like that sand: moment by moment, hour by hour, day by day."

She dropped the sand, and was thoughtful for a long moment. Presently she laughed the least bit, took up again her handfuls of sand, looked at her captain and nodding, motioned to him to hold out his hands. When he did so, she, holding her cupped hands above his—he noticed how finely they were formed—let the sand trickle through hers into his. He looked enquiringly. "What is it?" he asked.

"Don't you understand?" she demanded gravely. "It is a life running into another life."

She moved as if to rise. Don John was at once on his feet and extending his hands to her. She did not know it was a prince who waited on her commands, a

finished actor in whose veins flowed the proudest blood of Europe; she only knew how graceful, how courteous this infidel slave at her side always was—only knew how her blood surged and beat rebelliously at her temples when the eyes of her slave-protector rested on hers.

"Come out on the sands," she said petulantly; "I want to feel the waves on my feet."

She slipped off her pantofles and darting ahead, halted before the long crawl of the waves on the sloping beach. They rolled in quietly enough and Miriam, as they receded, stepped gingerly after them.

"Don't go too far," cautioned her captain. But go she would until a full-heading roller moving without sound or foam, was almost upon her. Don John saw it. "Back, back, quick!" he exclaimed. She hesitated. "Your Highness!" he cried reproachfully and dashing forward caught her up in his arms just in time to save her.

She screamed a little, laughed a little and with her arms around his neck clung to him. The big wave passed under her and caught him almost to the hips.

Carrying her slowly up the beach, he let her down on the dry sand near her pantofles. "How shall I thank you!" she cried. "I should have been buried—and you—you are drenched!"

"It is nothing, Your Highness."

She frowned a little, looking intently at him. "But don't call me 'Your Highness.' I hate it. Call me Miriam, Parda, when we are alone."

"I'll try to remember," he smiled.

She was resentful. "Shall you have to try *very* hard to remember?"

"I mean—" he took up her sandals to put them on her feet, "It will be hard to remember to call *'Miriam'*

'Your Highness,' when we are *not* alone," he responded gallantly.

She checked him with the sandals. "Parda, you shan't do that. You are not my slave—when we are alone. Give me the sandals." She took them from him and steadying herself with one hand on his arm, put them on, herself. "When we are alone—I give you your freedom, Parda—remember."

"Miriam," he said quietly, "you are indeed 'Rose of the Morning'—lovelier than a rose, more lovely than morning. I hope you will always be happy."

The wind played in the little brown ringlets that curled around her temples. She grew conscious before his gaze. "We must go back," she said drearily. "Fatima will never forgive me." Then explosively, "I hate to go back to all those people—don't you?" she frowned.

"How can you ask me?"

They stood at the foot of their rock chimney. "Parda, how shall I *ever* get up there again!" she exclaimed in dismay. They had barely room to stand together in the opening.

"We will manage," he replied. "I'll lift you till you can catch that grapevine. Just do as I tell you. Don't be afraid."

Laying her hand on his arm, Miriam looked up to him with simple confidence. "I'm not afraid—with you, Parda."

The wind sweeping in from the sea, crossed the sands and eddying among the rocks, wafted to him in its tang the fragrance of her hair. It maddened him. He caught her in his arms and as her eyes closed, crushed her to him and pressed his kisses upon her unresisting lips.

She rested limply in his embrace. To her it was

the swoon of a moment long dreamed of; but its overwhelming reality beggared her dreams.

"Miriam!" he exclaimed, when he could speak. Her eyes opened. She looked up with a tenderness, the most appealing and the most beautiful he had ever seen in human eyes. Then with a start, almost convulsive, she put up her hands and hid her face against his arm. He was still breathing hard and fast; it seemed as if their hearts, pressed against each other, beat in mad pulse together.

"Parda!" she murmured despairingly. Her voice had never fallen so sweet on his ears. "What have I done! What have I done!"

"Nothing, my Miriam, nothing you shall ever be sorry for if I can help it. You have seen that I love you, my beautiful Rose—you swept me off my feet. But now—kiss me as if we might never kiss again."

"I—not you, Parda, am to blame," she sighed, when she could speak. "I tried not to love you! Oh, what happiness!"

In her flutter Miriam was soon talking to Don John in Turkish. She was too excited to realize what she was doing. But there is one language in which all lovers are at home—laughter; it is the language of lovers.

The next moment both were laughing at her mistake. Miriam's head fitted perfectly against the hollow of Don John's arm and when she nestled her face against his shoulder, he buried his face in her hair. She rested in his embrace lovely as a humming-bird, snared by her thirst for the nectar of love and companionship. Every time she looked up she was met by an ardent kiss and still frightened at the entrancing novelty she hid her head each time in innocent shame

in the folds of his jacket—and both laughed unrestrainedly.

He was conscious of holding in his arms an unspoiled bit of lovely femininity—his to protect or to betray. When he looked down into her eyes he saw in their depths the fire that had delivered her into his keeping, and the contentment that deemed no harm could come through him whom she loved and trusted. He recalled her devotion when he lay sick unto death. It was she to whom he owed his very life and it should not, he swore to himself, be used, even in the light of her tempting eyes, against her. If this was hard, it was not too hard to think of her innocence and of what he owed her; not too hard to hold her safe under the ægis of noblesse oblige.

He drew her head closer to drink in the fragrance that had overcome him. Looking into each other's eyes, they exchanged those confidences, forged in the white heat of a first moment, that prints them indelibly on the heart.

"Mistress Miriam!"

They started together at the sound of her name coming in a shrill, high voice from above.

"Mistress Miriam!"

There are times when a man, acting swiftly in a crisis, takes the situation from a woman and forestalling danger, asserts himself master of the worst to come. But it is not in a crisis such as this. Don John indeed looked startled, but his only thought was to press his new-found treasure close to him; it is woman who was created to meet some particular crises. Miriam rose to the occasion as if practiced in clandestine danger: she asserted herself composedly.

"Yes, Fatima!" she called back with child-like inno-

cence, though still captive in her first longed-for embrace.

"Come up!" cried Fatima above. "You have stayed too long, my mistress."

"I know," Miriam managed to say between assaults from lips that were smothering hers. "It is so hard to get started climbing these rocks. I'm glad you didn't try it, Fatima," she called, with a glance at Don John, as she pushed his face away with her hand. "We are coming right up!"

"There are more roses now in your cheeks, Dawn Flower," he whispered, "than ever were in your gardens."

Miriam tried with both hands to rub them out. She looked pretty in making them worse. "They will tell terrible tales to that lynx-eyed Fatima," she murmured sorrowfully.

"No," he suggested, "the climbing will account for them. Just climb a little—scream a little—laugh a little. But don't look as lovely as you look now, my Miriam."

"Parda!" She lifted her finger gravely. "Don't forget and call me, 'Miriam,' up there!"

"Darling!" he exclaimed, with a smile, "I have *some* respect for my head!"

CHAPTER XL

TRIAL AT ARMS

On the galley, both proved equal to their parts. Miriam reclined among her cushions, a picture of the overbored girl of strict Turkish seclusion. Her captain paced his narrow quarter-deck, above, the stern and silent commander charged with the safety of craft and crew.

Yet both breasts were filled with one emotion; both treasured one secret, and lived only till they could secretly meet again.

In the sheltered seclusion of the villa gardens, they met that evening and relived the stolen happiness of the day.

In the morning, a storm cloud rose dark on their horizon. During the night, Ali Pasha had arrived at the villa with his full escort and his retinue of servants.

Miriam, roused early next morning from girlhood dreams, was the first to be clasped in her father's arms in his apartments and to tell him the news of his household. Muley, dancing attendance on his master, as one with much to tell and really not much to tell, hopped around the facts and fancies of his liege's long absence with more excitement than Miriam betrayed, though the girl had much more to tremble about. But in Miriam's blood there was no tremor.

Both she and Muley, however, had one story for which words were not wanting—that was, the attack

of the pirate and the escape. Honest Muley did not minimize the part of the slaves in saving the day and Miriam naturally emphasized that of Don John. Her dark eyes, straight from her father, grew eloquently large and blazed at moments while she recounted the sudden and vicious onslaught, the defeat and the deaths among her appointed defenders, the incident of the French scimitar, and her delivery through her hardy slave from the fate which awaited her at the hands of the renegado and his degenerate master.

Ali listened in dreadful silence. Only those who knew him could have realized how he raged, inwardly, while Miriam told her story. As Muley had already confided to John, the situation was owing to a drunken and degenerate Sultan whose intimate favor could be obtained only by men equally base in ministering to his shameful appetites. The magnificent empire bequeathed to him by his ferocious but able father had been so well organized that it was running itself during the earlier years of Selim's debaucheries. The tried statesmen and the great commanders of the old régime still stood between the Turkish Empire and its sottish ruler. Ali was in power, because Selim had no man with whom he dared replace him in the high naval command. The renegado, de Castro had acquired such aspirations and sought to secure favor with the brutish Sultan by imitating his vices and ministering to his unspeakable degeneracy.

The Pasha had suspected the designs of the pair on his devoted daughter—now he had proof of them.

"Bring in these Arnauts," was all he said when Miriam had finished. "Bring also the French scimitar."

Muley despatched assistants with respective orders. While one was bringing in the scimitar, the other

appeared with Don John and Pedro. Both bowed low before the great sea fighter.

Don John, in especial, seeing him for the first time, studied him with guarded but the keenest interest. Spare in figure and of a commanding height, Ali Pasha was then at the zenith of his brilliant naval career. He was bronzed of feature with dark, almost black hair that curled slightly, and a curling black beard. His eyes, like Miriam's, were dark and searching. He was marked slightly from smallpox, yet his countenance was open and magnanimous as Don John had been told. He was temperate and valiant; a just and generous master to his slaves; frank and noble in temper toward his equals; faithful to his friends; fierce and terrible, yet generous, toward his enemies. He now wore the simple undress uniform of a naval pasha, but sat in his chair of state as he scrutinized his two "Arnaut" slaves.

Don John and Pedro bore his scrutiny well and Miriam left her father to guess which of the two her personal defender might be.

He made no mistake but he sat a moment longer in thought.

"Arnaut fishermen?" He addressed the question to both captives in Lingua Franca—Don John answered affirmatively.

"Where did you learn to handle a scimitar?" he demanded curtly of Don John.

"I am not an expert, noble Pasha. I was only defending my master's house."

"Strip to the waist, young man," said Ali rising.

Don John drew off his jacket and blouse.

The Pasha walked around him, feeling him and inspecting him as if he were a horse. Apparently the

scrutiny was satisfactory. Ali spoke in Turkish to an attendant. From a convenient armoire the eunuch produced two scimitars. He handed one to Ali; its mate he tendered to Don John.

"Defend yourself," said the Pasha sternly.

It was no part of Don John's design to shine as a swordsman—though exercises in his naval training had given him practice with the Oriental weapon; and had he not felt the necessity of minimizing any facility he might possess with it, he knew also it is never wise to outshine a superior in any contest of skill.

With Miriam looking attentively on, her father launched at the youthful Spaniard a spirited assault. Don John betrayed an awkwardness but held his defensive. And when Ali, after a vigorous onslaught in which he backed his antagonist from corner to corner, quieted down to give Don John a chance for the offensive, the latter appeared even more awkward in attack and the Pasha had no difficulty in making short shrift of the captive's attempts to pass his guard.

Once more the Pasha attacked. He met the same odd defensive and desisted. He was disappointed.

"I don't see how a man could put the pirate at his mercy with that sort of sword play," was all he said. But thinking it over afterward, he was keen-witted enough to realize that at no time had he been able to put the Arnaut at *his* mercy. Questioning Pedro briefly, the Pasha dismissed the pair and the attendants except Muley.

Perplexed by the personality of the queer slave, but fertile in expedient, the Pasha resolved to find a way to make him fight if he could fight. Recalled to the Pasha's presence, Don John found him alone in the room, sitting with a scimitar in his hand.

"I am told," began the Pasha, addressing the cap-

tive, "that you gave a good account of yourself with this weapon when my barge was attacked. It was presented to me—" he regarded the scimitar pleasantly —"by a monarch of France. It is fortunate, indeed, for us that Christian monarchs hate one another so like devils; were it otherwise our conquest of Europe would be harder; but we shall have it all, ultimately. Since you baptized this steel, as the Christians say, in defence of the honor of my house, I present it, in turn, to you as a reward of valor."

Don John took the blade from the hand of the Pasha with a curious smile and bowed his thanks.

"Not only defend my house," continued his master, "but if you are attacked by my enemies, use it with equal energy to defend yourself."

Don John, returning to his room, inspected the richly jewelled gauntlet and guard, balanced the weapon, cut the air with it, admired its curve, and smiled at the irony of fate that should cast into his hand this rich souvenir of the two most formidable enemies of his own country.

A group of naval chiefs, dining that day with Sokolli, discussed with him naval affairs. Seraskier Pertau Pasha, commander of the armies, Hassan Barbarossa, son of the famous Barbarossa, and Aluch Pasha, the Calabrian renegado—Pedro's former much hated master, the "Scaldhead," and the man who had escaped at Messina and at Algiers—were at the dinner, among others. The talk turned on personal feats of arms. Sword play became for the moment the topic. Aluch boasted that he had in his command the best swordsman in the Turkish navy—one who had met and bested all comers. Ali Pasha who bore no love for his scald-head subordinate, welcomed the opening and professed skepticism.

"I have at my villa," he said with an air of indifference, "an Arnaut slave that I will back against your champion either with swords or scimitars."

The repulsive but redoubtable Calabrian jumped at the challenge. Wagers were laid, Aluch named swords, and the meeting was appointed at the Pasha's villa for the next morning.

That night, Ali summoned his Arnaut. Don John, suspicious, listened without much interest until the Pasha let fall the remark that Aluch's swordsman was a Spanish renegado. National pride was stirred: hatred of renegados could be quenchable only in blood, by a son of Charles V. Don John would greatly have preferred to keep out of a display of skill but he could not avoid this meeting without humiliation for his patron and himself; and the temptation of a fighting man always is to fight.

"I will meet him," said Don John, "since it is your pleasure. If I fail to reach your expectations, remember I am only a fisherman, Highness."

"It is arranged that he shall come to arrest you," explained the Pasha, producing a pair of swords and handing John one. "You will resist—the fight will be on."

The captive reflected a moment and offered a suggestion. "If the renegado be a Spaniard, he knows well how to fight after the Spanish fashion. Give us both Spanish daggers, also, that either I may finish with him, or he may do as much for me."

Ali was evasive; he had no mind that the fleet should lose either of two good fighting men. "Aluch, as the challenger, chose swords—we have no voice. Now—loosen up your arm," he added, taking position with the second sword.

A vigorous play of a few moments left Ali again

mystified. "You must do better than that in the morning," he said, "or Aluch will spend my money. But my pride, too, is at stake; if you beat him you shall have your freedom reasonably soon—surely that's worth fighting for!"

Don John had had no chance to see Miriam that night, but Muley told her of what was in prospect on the morrow. Behind a lattice, above and overlooking the Pasha's armory, Miriam, much perturbed, took her place, in the morning. Aluch, the slouching Calabrian, arrived with his party in his pleasure galley not long after sunrise. Ali, with an eye to dramatic effect, had ordered the fiction of Don John's arrest.

Don John was sent with Pedro to the armory, a wing of the villa he had never entered before. Under instructions the two were polishing the pistols and swords when Aluch's party, headed by his swordsman, entered the room. The two pashas, with their personal guards, were concealed in an alcove. Pedro had been apprised by his master as to what was in the wind. "The fellow is a renegado and of our own country, they tell me," his master added. "There are very few such vipers fortunately, and I hope to-morrow's sun may rise on one less. If I fail, Selim the Sot may count one less enemy," he added, buckling his sword to his belt.

Few words were wasted when the champion confronted Don John as the man he was to take. But when the Arnaut captive was told he was under arrest, his only answer was to draw.

"Down with your sword, dog," exclaimed the renegado insolently. "Don't dare to draw against me. I am the first swordsman in the Turkish fleet."

"And I," retorted Don John, tauntingly, "the worst in Christendom. Pray be easy with me."

Both had spoken in Lingua Franca. The renegado whipped out his own blade and without wasting an instant to test his antagonist, attacked—he looked forward to a speedy victory.

The captive made no haste further to arouse his violent adversary. He took the defensive and though displaying no great skill seemed just agile enough to maintain it—as Ali, watching with deep interest, had already twice seen him do. The renegado, pressing his apparent victim around the large room, appeared more than once on the brink of a final victory; yet he could not at any point quite follow his advantage home. Infuriated at length by the tactics of his antagonist, the renegado attempted still more brilliant passes—still without the hoped-for result.

But what Ali had not yet seen, he was now to see—his unassuming fisherman had measured his opponent and the real fight began. Incensed by the insolence of the base Spaniard, in attack, and perceiving his insufferable conceit, the captive yielded to the temptation and let himself out.

Where, an instant before, Aluch's champion had been pressing his adversary all over the room, he was in the twinkling of an eye halted and put to all his feints to avoid being impaled on the point of his enemy's rapier.

Ali, in hiding, breathed harder at the ferocity of the encounter. Himself a seasoned swordsman, there was presented before him an agility, a grace, a nimbleness of hand with a speed of foot unexampled in any encounter he could remember. The captive's whole body seemed only wires of nerve and muscle concentrating on the whirling in one hand of the steel it guided. Two Spanish swordsmen were contending for mastery with

weapons despised by the Turk. And when Don John woke to action, the play went so fast that no eye could analyze it. Two men of snake-like nimbleness darted about the pavement as if their footing were India rubber; two clashing blades cut the air like tongues of lightning while the sportsmen pashas and their men looked on in admiration—the eunuchs fled the scene.

It was not within human resistance long to withstand the merciless assault that the prince bent on the renegado. Of a sudden, the champion's weapon flew from his hand. It rang on the pavement. He stumbled backward. Falling, he snatched a dagger from his belt to avert the last moment. Don John, his eye flaming with fury, stood panting over him. "Pick up your sword, dog! I'll put a mark on you, you'll never lose."

The taunt was too biting to ignore. Frothing at the mouth, the man scrambled to his feet. Once more he essayed to ward off the vicious onslaught of his angry enemy. But Aluch's champion was no longer aggressive. He was striving to defend himself—and while the rapiers clashed, onlookers saw—without even perceiving the lightning-like slash that caused it—a streak of red break suddenly across the renegado's forehead. Blood streamed into his eyes. He strove, half-blinded, to fling it away with his finger. The Pasha signalled, guards rushed in and while the captive stood silent, guided the steps of the wounded man away, Aluch and his party following.

Ali was in a transport of good humor. He laid an admiring hand on his swordsman's slippery shoulder.

"Become a Moslem," he exclaimed, "and I will make you a pasha!"

The blood of his father rose hot in the swordsman's

veins. "Become a Christian," he blurted out before he could check himself, "and I will make you an admiral of Spain!"

Ali stared, amazed. "Dog of a Christian," he thundered, drawing his scimitar. "Do you mock me?"

What threatened to become a serious moment was happily averted. Miriam had rushed down from her lattice and dashed into the room at the sound of angry words. She threw her arms around her father's neck. "Father!" she pleaded. "He only half-understands the Lingua Franca. Remember! He saved your daughter."

CHAPTER XLI

THE PASHA DANGLES A BAIT

Don John hardly realized how recklessly he had spoken—how instant the change could be in such a man as Ali from favor to deadly enmity. But the impudent captive was angrily ordered to the villa prison and Miriam breathed again: she had seen heads struck off for less.

She dared not risk a visit. But she sent down her lover's supper from her own kitchen—a porridge of lentils, a salmi of woodcock and thrush, stewed with "bootleg" wine of Cyprus; a dish of ortolans garnished with mushrooms from the Pasha's island; a leg of lamb, with capers from his garden walls; a salad of herbs from his private garden and a basket of figs and fruits from his own orchards. Indeed, as Miriam had the better chef, his prisoner was fed that evening rather more sumptuously than the Turkish commander himself.

"I don't know what to do with that hot-headed young Arnaut," said Ali to his daughter in the morning. "In a generous moment yesterday I told him he should be free if he won over the renegado. Then he insults me——"

"But father," interrupted his demure daughter, "you have the best excuse in the world not to act on your promise. He isn't yours to free. He belongs to *me*. You forgot that. Tell the insolent fellow that it was your oversight, and that you find yourself embarrassed.

But that for his *freedom,* he must apply to me." She spoke with a decision that brought a smile to her father.

"I want the impertinent rustic for captain of your pleasure galley," continued Miriam; "and by the way, Father, you never use it any more—let us call it *mine.* I feel perfectly safe in it with this Arnaut and his big Pedro. You know how I love the Island—just as you used to love it, Father, when Mother——"

Ali Pasha, by birth a Circassian, had been kidnapped when a child by a Turkish marauder and sold to a pasha. Eager to learn and quick to obey in everything, his military career had been one of achievement almost from the beginning. While still a junior officer in the army, he had captured in a military expedition an Albanian girl of signal charm. She was but fifteen. He sent her to his home, wooed her with consummate tact and appealing restraint until she grew to love him as he loved her; then he made her his wife—she had been Miriam's mother—and he was left heartbroken when she died at her daughter's birth. The later marriage with Selim's sister had been purely an affair of state.

Miriam was the lovely counterfeit of his buried love. Like her mother, she ruled his heart. She was at this time just above the age at which he had brought her mother home from the wars; and together with the profession of arms, in which he led, his daughter was his absorbing interest in life.

Miriam had inherited her father's tact, courage and personality. She loved him devotedly; but a new life had now come into her heart and she was bent on bringing her father's devotion, and that of her new-found lover, at some future time, together.

While Don John was enjoying his wholly unexpected supper, after the sinking of the sun, Ali dining alone with Miriam, was speculating as to how best to

put to use the talents of his Arnaut swordsman, claimed, as to ownership, by his very competent daughter.

In the morning the same subject occupied his active mind. When he was ready to start for the navy yard he sent for Don John and asked him to bear him company. In the Pasha's longboat the silent Arnaut with him was rowed the whole length of the Turkish fleet —perhaps to impress him with its strength—and afterward to Ali's flagship. The nameless prince was not a stranger to flagships but standing on the spotless deck, he perceived as he looked about that the Turks had nothing to learn even from the Spaniards as to elegance in detail for the galley of an admiral.

While fleet matters were being discussed by the officers, three newly-captured Greek pirates were haled by their guard before the Pasha for judgment.

Turning from his group, Ali heard briefly the accusation of the captain who had brought them in. In Lingua Franca he then asked the accused a few stern questions. Their defence was not satisfactory. Ali dismissed the matter in two words: "Behead them;" and turned to his officers.

As the three condemned were being led away, the last of them, breaking from his guard, bounded toward the Pasha, with a knife in hand that he had concealed from his captors. Don John had seen the move. Aiming a vicious blow as he jumped within arm's length of Ali, the pirate, by a narrow margin, was intercepted by Don John, who sprang at him and caught his knife arm as he struck at the Pasha's neck.

The Greek, a powerful man, whirled on the captive Spaniard. Before anyone could intervene, the two were struggling, and the scene was one of confusion. The two men rolled together on the deck. The

Pasha watching, pistol in hand, could not safely shoot; and before the others could act, Don John had wrenched away the pirate's knife, and choked him into submission. The Spaniard springing to his feet, the bloody knife in hand, flung it over the ship's side. To the crowding soldiers he said, "Take your prisoner."

Ali's face revealed nothing of his feelings, but he had sheathed his pistol and drawn his scimitar. "Hold!" he said, sternly, to the scrambling guards. "Give him a knife and release him!"

The bleeding Greek, as a dagger was put in his hand, stared like a wild animal beset by enemies as he stood, breathing wildly. He made a rush for the Pasha. Ali's scimitar cut the air. The head of the pirate dropped to the deck in one direction while his quivering trunk rolled in another. "Take it away," commanded the Pasha, without raising his voice.

He thanked Don John very briefly and pointed to his right hand. "You are cut."

"Only scratched."

"The knife may be poisoned." He sent his guest down to his surgeon and while the deck was being cleaned, proceeded with his conference.

At lunch with his staff, the Pasha seated Don John at his right hand. "You did me a good turn this morning."

"I only happened to be near at hand," countered the guest.

"You are quick."

"Not so quick as your pirate—otherwise he would not have got so close to Your Highness' neck."

"Be that as it may, I like your action, fisherman. And I meant yesterday what I said: 'Become a Moslem and one day you shall command a fleet such as this.' It is invincible. With this fleet to open the way, our

Sultan shall one day feed oats to his horses on the altars of St. Peter's."

The Spaniard only listened.

"You need have no fear that you cannot rise to the highest command," continued Ali. "Nor that you will be in strange company. Merely put away the Christian superstition. With us, no heed is taken of a man's blood or birth; with us, rank, wealth and power are open to the bold and the brave. Deserters from the Cross fill our ranks. At this very moment out of ten viziers, eight are renegados. Twelve of our best generals and four of our most renowned admirals are likewise renegados; renegados are the sap of our military tree. Christendom itself supplies the followers of the Prophet with the deadliest foes of the Cross. And our captured women constantly renew the life stream of our national vigor. Think it over, Mister Fisherman."

The second day and the third, the Pasha dangled the tempting bait before the man he had resolved to win for his fleet; but nothing he could urge would shake the amiable stubbornness of Don John.

"You refuse what any man should be proud to accept," frowned Ali one evening, at the villa.

"Pasha," smiled the captive, regretfully, "I am a fisherman."

"I incline to think you must be," retorted Ali, testily. "You are certainly a liar."

Don John took the rating in good part. "Fishermen, as Your Highness knows, have ever been the mainstay of Christendom," he urged, as gently as possible, in order to give the least possible offense. "Judas, Your Highness, was not a fisherman."

Ali discouraged, waved his hand to the two guards. "Back to prison with him," was all he said.

That night the Spaniard in his cell—though his

quarters, thanks to a hidden friend, were scarce harsh enough to deserve that name—lying on his couch, much depressed over his situation and his slender chances for successful escape, heard a soft knocking at his door. He rose and stood expectant before it, awaiting the opening. He already knew enough of Turkish ways to be prepared for anything. It might be a delicacy from the hand of his mistress, or it might be the black eunuchs and the bow-string for a stubborn prisoner.

The door opened carefully and in the almost complete darkness, a soft, slender, robed and perfumed thing slipped, noiselessly, close to his breast and nestled silently in his arms. He clasped her passionately, showered kisses on her upturned face until he found her lips; then held them long to his own.

"I was so lonesome," she whispered. "Then, too, I feared you were hungry. I couldn't get a supper down to you earlier. Fatima is with me here in the dark, carrying a tray."

"But my darling," he protested, "you are risking your very life——"

The anxiety in his voice repaid her.

"I don't care for that. I am risking yours, that's all that worried me. But I *couldn't* help it. Oh, hold me close—I'm so hungry for your arms—" her voice faltered, "if you still love me."

"My Rose! I shall love you to the end—forever."

"Parda! If we are caught and must die—would it not be better to die together than to live apart?"

He held her closer. "We must not die, we must not live apart. Be careful, be brave, be patient, my Rose—all shall come right—it must."

Miriam whispered to Fatima to enter. "Do not light the little lamp till the door is locked again," whispered

Miriam to Don John. Fatima set the tray on the couch. The reluctant parting was cut short by the nervous maid and the door was carefully made fast behind the stealthy visitors.

In the morning Ali sent again for the captive. "I promised you your freedom. My daughter reminds me you belong to her, but she will not be harsh—be patient. She pleads that I allow you to remain captain of my galley when she uses it. I have consented, if you give me your parole not to attempt to escape—do you give it?"

"I do."

"Freely and without mental reservations?"

"Freely and without mental reservations."

"Parda, who are you?"

"Honorable Pasha, it would take long to tell—do not, I beg of you, press me."

"I know one thing you are—a gentleman in disgrace."

"Could my countrymen see my plight," said the captive, humorously, "they certainly would consider me in disgrace."

"I am called to the city for a general naval conference. My Janissaries, my soldiers, my slaves are here—but no one of them is a leader. You have the qualities of one. For the present then, on your parole, I leave you. And in token of my confidence, I shall soon present you with my pistols—they are Italian and dependable—use them as you do my scimitar, only to defend the honor of my house or against your enemies. Can you use a bow?" asked Ali abruptly.

Don John shook his head negatively.

"Too bad. In certain emergencies, there is no better weapon."

"I have heard more than once of Your Highness'

skill with one. And I perceive that you arm men with the bow, rather than with the arquebus."

"True," responded the Pasha. He reflected a moment before continuing. "I fear the day of the bow is drawing to a close—even the arquebus is passing, and the day of the new musket dawning. I am sorry for it. The bow is always ready and easy to manage while in rain or snow or fog your arquebus or musket—with a wet priming pan—is useless. I can discharge thirty arrows while you are charging your arquebus!

"The art of war may be changing—it probably is; but the bow is still our main reliance and as long as war depends on the personal bravery of the individual soldier we shall conquer all enemies.

"Look about you, captive. Can you see anywhere else in the world an activity in navy yard and arsenal such as you have seen this morning?

"The Turk himself does not do all that you see of shipbuilding, and the arming of his ships; but more successfully than any Christian power to-day, he gets it done."

"I will give your slave," said her father to Miriam, when he kissed her good-bye later, "a taste of the pleasures of authority. We shall see whether it changes his viewpoint."

That evening at the villa, Ali touched on a more personal subject. He had sent for Don John, and spoke with evident reluctance. "My position in regard to the Sublime Porte," he said to the captive, "is delicate. A prime favorite with my brother-in-law, Selim, seems to be an enemy of my honor, in the person of my daughter. As you know, he has sought to abduct her for his master. I make no complaint to the Sultan. I defend my honor—you can understand. I am leaving

for the city to-night. Take these as a token of my confidence that you likewise will defend it."

The Pasha drew from his sash a pair of short, richly jewelled pistols. He now handed them, butts forward, to his captive and without waiting for thanks or any further expression from him, signified that the interview was at an end.

CHAPTER XLII

A PAROLE SURRENDERED

Deprived of her galley while it was in her father's service, Miriam turned to her caique for short, water trips. With silken sails, liveried oarsmen and gay trappings, it gave its mistress, under the canopy, the setting an artist would provide for a gem. Moreover, Parda was in command; and though the caique afforded scant privacy, there were glances to be caught, subtle exchanges in orders, questions, and under all these, the comforting anticipation of dusk, a sheltered recess, the fragrance of the gardens, the song of a nightingale, and stolen moments that fled all too fast.

It was not hard for the innocent arch-plotter of the villa to coax her father to restore Parda to the command of the pleasure galley when it was no longer needed by him—the only stipulation being that Parda should make no attempt to escape without surrendering his parole—for Ali was not unwilling that the Arnaut should have a further taste of authority. Meanwhile, the Admiral Pasha lived in his city palace, being continually engaged in naval conferences.

Miriam's pearl-like island in the Marmora was her daily diversion during these too-short days.

One afternoon while she was at the Island a thunderstorm burst. Don John and Pedro hurried Miriam and Fatima to the galley as the nearest refuge; the others were at the casino.

Miriam sought the inner cabin with Fatima. Having changed her raiment, she sent presently for Don John.

"Parda," she said as she closed the door behind him, his captive name coming from her velvet throat, "Parda," she repeated, her hand still on the bronze handle of the little door, "how does it seem to be slave and lord, at the same time? Don't you see? I open the door, just a finger-breadth, Parda—I open it to all the world, there is the world outside—and lo! you are a slave.

"I close it, thus—I shut out the world and behold! you are master, ruler, lord! True, only of poor me—but yet a lord. You fondle me, you kiss me—I resist, I am helpless. Is it not strange—master! *slave!*" She spoke the final word with proper scorn, as she bore the gaze of his ardent eyes defiantly. Rain was clinging to her hair; but her eyes were brighter and clearer than the sparkling drops loath to leave the brown curls in which they lay hiding.

"Rosebud," retorted Parda softly, "how is it that you, a great little-girl lady—a living princess——"

"Who told you that?"

"Fatima told me——"

Miriam tossed her head. "Fatima's head is full of Circassian nonsense!"

"Muley, too, told me. But only to look at you proves it—how could you be anything else? If by any freak of fortune Parda ever has a kingdom—*you* shall be its queen!"

"What do you mean?"

"What I say."

"Dreamer! You are worse than Fatima. Yet you are just like the princes Fatima tells me stories about. You are not a real prince, are you, Parda?"

"Fishermen are not often princes. But I have played at being a prince."

He veered quickly from the dangerous topic and said to her, banteringly, "How can you condescend even to look at a captive, an exile? And do you know —Fragrance of a Thousand Flowers—what you have done, how unutterably cruel you have been? The Turk that brought me in, the trader that sold me to Muley, these were petty criminals compared to you. They enslaved only my body. You enslave my heart!

"But being master, too," he continued, "so *you* say —I shall punish your cruelty. Every kiss on your lips shall be a lash for your conduct."

Her eyes sparkled disdainfully. "See that I am well punished."

Outside, the storm was passing. "Rosebud," he resumed at length, "why do Oriental women cover their mouths and leave exposed their soft, lovely eyes—such as yours?"

"It is the lips, and not the eyes," said Miriam, "that reveal the secrets of a woman's heart."

"Rosebud?"

"What is it, briar thorn?"

"Let me see your lips."

She was the stubborn child. "No!"

"Let me see your lips."

"I will not."

"Please?"

"You have seen them too often."

"But when I last saw them the sun was shining. I want to see how they look in the rain."

She drew aside the window curtain. "It has stopped raining. Besides," she added, pushing him relentlessly away, "it is time to go on deck—there may be pirates about."

"Rosebud! the most dangerous pirate on the Marmora already has you in his arms!"

Sometimes their talks were more serious. "We are started," said Miriam one evening in the garden, speaking scarcely above a whisper, "on the path to the valleys of paradise—but how, Parda, shall we reach the end? We cannot go on forever in *this* way. Sometimes we shall be caught—and then! My father's wrath! Parda, that is terrible to think of. What shall we do?"

"I think of it every day. I must go back to my own country. I have a duty there. But more than that, it is the *only* way out of this. If I go, I can bring back, not alone money, but better—that which will free us both."

She trembled in his arms. "It means a separation—and I dread it as I dread death."

"But you are brave. I remember the day with the pirates; not a cry, not a word, not a tear. As you stood against the cabin wall that day, I thought you the bravest woman in the world."

"Ah, Parda! It is easy to be brave in that way. The pirate struck only at my life, my honor. My dagger should have cheated him of both." Her eyes flashed as she threw back her head—only slightly, but the move was intense with meaning, and her tones rang in composed defiance. When she had spoken, she leaned limply on her lover. Her head fell against his shoulder. "But this!" she exclaimed unsteadily. "It strikes at my heart."

One day word came from the Pasha to bring the galley to town and for a fortnight he used it, with his captive captain in command—for fleet inspection. His anger at Don John never seemed to last long. And

when the captive drew his attention to certain repairs needed on the galley, he charged him with directing them.

"Muley tells me," observed the Pasha to him one day, "you have taken new measures at the Island when you are there—leaving a strong watch on the galley and a lookout at all times on the roof of the casino——"

"It is the highest point on the Island," explained the Captive.

"Yet none of my dull clods ever thought of such simple measures. You have the military instinct. Tomorrow, bring my daughter from the villa. A light squadron has brought in the spoil of a Spanish convoy trader. I want her to see the finery of the Christian dogs."

In the morning, Don John brought Miriam and her attendants to the quarter-deck of the Pasha's flagship where a canopy had been raised, carpets spread and seats arranged. Ali seated himself with his daughter, heavily veiled, on his right. Don John stood behind the Pasha with folded arms, in turban, and with a cloak hanging from his shoulder. The captured cargoes consisted of Oriental stuffs passing rich, designed to supply Madrid traders with the velvets and silks, cloths of gold and silver and those jewels of the Orient dear to the vanities of Spanish beauties.

Opened in huge bales before the Admiral, these spoils were divided and assigned as prizes among the captains, officers and crews that had brought them in.

Following these distributions, the prisoners were paraded before the naval judge—among them were sailors, merchants, servants and last, a comely young Spanish woman, with her two maids. The unfortunate women were in wretched case enough; but the condi-

tion of their young mistress, evidently a gentlewoman, was desperate indeed. Pulled, hauled, and maltreated by ribald captors inflamed by her beauty, the unhappy maiden, her clothing almost torn from her body in her efforts to defend herself, stood in a pitiful disarray, unwilling, in her shame, to lift her eyes from the deck.

Don John looked at her in amazement; then anger, swift and overwhelming, burst all bounds of restraint. He strode toward her and snatching the cloak from his shoulder, enveloped her in its protection: bursting into tears, the girl, before he could escape, kissed his hand.

There was a stir on the deck. Ali did not move, but if his eyes had been daggers, Don John would have been transfixed.

In a voice stifled with rage he ordered Don John to stand before him. Miriam's heart almost stopped beating. "Do you know this woman?" demanded Ali sternly.

"I do not, Your Highness."

"Why do you interfere with my prisoners? She goes to the slave market."

The Spaniard spoke as placatingly as possible. "May she not go in decency as well as in nakedness?"

The Pasha's wrath seemed to increase. "What is she to you?" he thundered. "How dare you do this?"

Don John could not retreat if he would; and he would not if he could. All the cruelties of a savage warfare against his country, his people, his flesh and blood, seemed embodied in this naked misery of his countrywoman. It rose to reproach him for forgetfulness, for sloth, neglect. The blood of the Hapsburgs surged in his veins and it was only by a supreme effort that he restrained himself to answer: "I dare do it, Your Highness, as any man for any woman."

The Pasha retorted with sarcasm. "Do the fishermen of your country usually show such fine feelings toward women?"

The Prince spoke now with a manner, a dignity that even Miriam had never seen before: he spoke to his accuser no longer as a captive, a slave, but as a man of equal rank.

"Pasha." The word fell slowly on Miriam's excited ears. "I have deceived you. I am not a fisherman."

Ali spoke again sternly. "In that you have never deceived me. Again I ask—who are you?"

The Spaniard's lips were sealed. "A man without a name."

"Or can it be—" demanded his questioner suddenly, "a prince without a throne?"

Don John was silent. "Come then with me," said Ali rising, "and win a throne—the blood is in you." He dismissed the prisoners with a gesture. "To the slave market!"

"Father! A moment!" whispered Miriam. "I will buy the maiden and her women. May I?" Miriam looked at him appealingly.

Her father, looking down on her, shrugged his shoulders. "Are you, too, infected? Buy them if you like."

Following the disposal of the prisoners, two stout Turkish sailors brought forward, chained between them, a half-famished, snarling lion. An officer at the Pasha's side explained that it had been captured with the war galley convoying the ship and asked for orders concerning it.

The forlorn animal, looking about the deck, sniffed the air. Don John stared at it—could it be his "Austria?" Gone was his clean, tawny coat. His mane was

torn and tangled and his fur dirty and bedraggled—yet something that tugged at Don John's heart seemed to tell him the poor creature was his own. While he stood thus uncertain, the friendless beast sniffed again, spied Don John, broke in a sudden fury from his keepers and bounded to Don John's feet. There in the midst of a mad alarm, he crouched submissively, looking up at his master.

Restraining himself by an effort and sinking to one knee, the captive bent over his former pet and while the onlookers regarded the spectacle with amazement, stroked his head.

"He knows you!" exclaimed the surprised Pasha.

"He is from a Spanish galley on which I served for a time," explained Don John, speaking as quietly as he could. "He was brought aboard from Barbary; I nursed him."

What he did not explain was the emotion the sight of his neglected pet had caused him. It meant that his own galley had been captured. Yet none of its crew was among the prisoners he had seen. They were already slaves or had died fighting—the thought was a cruel one.

He rose to his feet. "Pasha," he said gravely, "you have been most considerate. Add one more favor. Give me to-morrow to finish the repairs on the galley. Then send a new captain and let me surrender my parole."

Ali with Oriental fatalism waved his hand. "Back to the oar, Captain, and take a week to think this over. You may change your mind."

Don John pointed to the lion at his feet. "May I take this poor beast to the villa and feed him?"

The Pasha waved his hand again. "I present him to you!"

CHAPTER XLIII

PARTING

Love found a way that night to elude the guards and Miriam in person inspected the prison supper set before Don John. She scolded the nervous servants and ordered delicacies from her own kitchen to tempt the captive's laggard palate. But despite his efforts to show his gratitude and be natural, the atmosphere of the prison cell was heavy with gloom.

Miriam herself felt a sense of impending tragedy but she would not allow it to overcome her. Women are more courageous than men; their love and sympathy are stronger than fear. Perceiving the deep and suppressed emotion of her lover, she studied him with the saucy feminine confidence of a girl sure of his devotion, demanded to know his troubles. She played the whole gamut of woman's emotions. She was by turns meek, impatient, tender, persistent, angry. She unloosed every resource of a feminine charm which to the mind of the too-well seasoned Spanish courtier exceeded that of all women he had ever known.

Yet he told her he must go. That he must make his escape from his captivity, even should the attempt cost him his life.

"But why, Parda, why?" pleaded Miriam.

"It is my duty," he answered firmly.

"Duty, duty!" she echoed scornfully. "Will you let one word part us perhaps forever; blight two lives; wither two hearts? What is your *duty?*"

He looked at her with tenderness. "Miriam, I cannot tell you."

She flamed with a sudden anger. "You—you love another!"

The eyes that so often met hers in passionate ardor regarded her steadily. "If I did, my Rose—if I did—*how* much easier parting would be."

"Then why do you leave me?"

"That we may one day—pray God an early day—join our lives together."

"Will you not make my people your people—we are not Turks? Will you not make my Prophet your Prophet? Do not forsake poor me."

"I will never forsake you. But I must go if we are to know lasting happiness. If I live, I will come back. If I never come back, know, Miriam, that I am dead."

They were standing face to face. His hands rested on her shoulders. He looked down into her eyes.

"Do not deceive me, Parda," she said in solemn pleading. "Swear that you will come back. Swear it by the beard of the Prophet."

He drew himself up in princely dignity. "I swear it, Miriam, by my honor."

"Your honor?"

Speaking with the utmost care and full deliberation, he gave the young girl his pledge. "In my veins," he said softly, "runs the honor of emperors and of kings. By that honor, Miriam, I swear I love but you alone. And that, death apart, I will come back."

She listened, silent and drinking in every word. When he had done, she still looked pleadingly up. "Then, if you love me, Parda, tell me your name," she said quietly.

"I am nameless."

As if the words strained her long-tried patience to the snapping point, Miriam burst into a defiant plea for confidence. Speaking with consuming earnestness, pleading, threatening, confessing, challenging, her voice rising in anger and falling in reproach, her words charged with emotion, Mirian, lifted out of herself by her feelings, once more addressed her captive. In her tenseness, in the fire of her eyes and features, he saw the very image of her flashing father.

"Tell me your name," she repeated in stern demand. "Shall I die by my own hand? Listen! I overheard you that first night you spoke with Pedro. I could not understand, but I heard you. You are his master; he, your servant. No fisherman, you, indeed, but of higher, higher blood. Do you think," she asked proudly, "I could have loved a fisherman?"

"That night," she continued, haltingly, "it was warm—I had sought the garden with Fatima and you walked near us. It was I who gave the alarm that foiled your escape. I, Miriam, am to blame for your recapture. Punish me if you will. I did not wish you to escape—because—" she hung her head, "because—I could not help it—I liked you. Now—this time you shall go because I love you! Then—sometime—I will follow. You are a man. You will not come back to me. But I, Miriam, I shall find my way to you. Your people shall be my people, your God, my God. Tell me your name."

He clasped her in his arms. "There is a stigma on my name, Miriam, that you know too little of life to understand. My father was a lord of high degree; my mother, a singer. I, Miriam, am called Don John."

It seemed as if she had heard but the last word. "Don John! Don John!" She repeated the name fondly to fix it on the lips his lips had so often

pressed, and in her heart, where his image alone was enthroned.

"Where," she whispered, "do you live, Parda?"

He answered without hesitation. "In the capital of Spain—Madrid, Miriam. Some day, please God, you shall see it."

Every weary day thereafter she treasured in her heart and pronounced with her lips, those three words: "Don John! Madrid!"

"Can you," she asked after a silence and hiding her head against his shoulder, "forgive me for keeping you?"

"Where love is, there can be no blame, my Miriam."

"But how shall poor you escape? The guards are everywhere."

He looked fondly down into her eyes. "I am used to stratagem—used to danger. But I would not part with you—you to whom I owe my life, my happiness, without telling you, I must go. That is why I have spoken. I would not break this heart that beats for me—no, not for a kingdom. Do you believe me?"

"I believe every word Parda speaks. But I don't want you in danger; I don't want you to be killed. Can I do nothing to help you get away without bloodshed?"

He gazed at the light of the small lamp that fitfully illumined their faces. "Can you make for me a great sacrifice?"

She answered with a simplicity of devotion that wrung his heart at the thought of parting from her. "What sacrifice," she asked, looking into his questioning eyes, "would be too great?"

"Can you possibly do it? Can you," he asked in turn, "give me your galley? But no," he exclaimed, for the thought revolted him. "It is too much."

She opened her answering eyes in amazement. "Too

much," she echoed. "Is it thus *your* women love? Too much? I have given you my heart—shall I not give you my galley? I have a hundred galleys—but only one heart!"

"If I am ever false to it, may God desert me. To-morrow evening, order the galley out. Say you wish for a moonlight ride on the Golden Horn with your father. I will reach the galley first and give orders to bring your father over from the flagship. When you reach the pier with Muley and the Janissaries, the galley has gone. Believing that your father has kept the galley overnight, you return disappointed to the villa.

"In the morning, I am far away. The crew? Some of them are Christian slaves—Venetians and Cypriots; the faithful Moors shall come to no harm; those who wish shall be set ashore and in two, three days will make their way back here. Arms? The Janissaries will leave their guns and scimitars on the galley when we come in at sunset, because you are going out in the evening."

Miriam had listened well. She was prepared. "Parda," she whispered, "to-morrow take me to the Island. Take me to where I first knew happiness; to where life first dawned for poor me. Don't oppose me, Parda. It is my last command."

On her right forefinger, the following day, she wore a ring he had never seen. It mounted a ruby that glowed and burned in a richness of fiery spirit. Sitting with her beloved giaour in their favorite retreat on the Island, she drew the ring from her finger, looked at it thoughtfully, and taking his right hand in her own, slipped the ring slowly on his forefinger. "Parda," she said, looking up at him. "Think of this as my heart's blood. It is to belong now to my master, to him who

was once my slave. Keep it as a pledge that, living or dead, Miriam will be true to Parda alone."

In the dying hours of that last day the tragic farewell was taken in the villa garden. Miriam, swooning as her lips burned under her lover's kisses, was tenderly placed by Don John in Fatima's arms; then he strode away.

Over the Marmora, the moon was rising. In the garden, Miriam, dry-eyed, watched the lighted galley move silently out to sea. She watched, with straining vision, a slender, erect figure on the quarter-deck. It, too, disappeared into the night; and turning away with a suppressed sob, she hid her face in her hands.

CHAPTER XLIV

ESCAPE

MORNING found the fugitive commander well on his way. The Moors, after rowing all night, were rebellious. But sunrise brought some wind and the Moorish oarsmen, though disgruntled, were relieved and at the point of the pistol held in readiness for more work at the oars. The Christian galley slaves, once told they were fleeing captivity, needed no further incentive to diligence. Food was scarce, but the faithful "Austria" who had been smuggled aboard the galley by Pedro was given his share with the crew and lay all day as usual at his master's feet. Somehow his presence cheered the fugitives and they did not begrudge his light ration. As soon as the Moslems could with any degree of safety be spared, they were ordered to ship their oars and swim ashore.

With the Turkish colors at the masthead, the galley had no trouble with passing war-vessels. What the Spaniard most feared was pursuit parties of the angry Pasha. With this danger in mind he hugged the coast cautiously, lay by, mostly, during the day, and used the oars or the sails at night as weather conditions dictated.

As the scant food supply disappeared—though Miriam had used every stratagem to increase the usual store—the adventurers were forced to subsist on such fish as they could catch; water could be had from the shore, and this need was easily supplied; and much hunting produced, at times, a little game. The great

effort of the refugees was to put as many miles as possible, in as short a time as possible, between themselves and their doubtless infuriated patron.

Aided at times by favoring winds and at other times retarded by storms, the galley reached, with much effort, the last line of the Turkish naval outposts, the coast where their raiders were wont to lie in wait for Venetian traders.

Darkness was coming on when the escaping captives rested on their oars that evening, and a good wind seemed to favor Pedro's wish to leave the coast and strike out in the night for the open sea.

Drifting thus along in silence, Don John spied in a cove not far away, the masts of what he assumed to be a Turkish frigate. His own masts, shipped during the day, had not yet been set up and he knew he had not been seen. His mind was quickly settled. Lowering the gig, he took Pedro with him and stealing ashore, got a good view of the vessel—a frigate, as he had supposed. His practised eye told him about how many men she carried and what her armament—though this particular feature was of no moment in his calculations.

He proposed to Pedro to capture her. Pedro stood aghast. "Master," he exclaimed with commiseration, "hardship and exposure I fear have turned your head."

"Not so, Pedro. Our men are half-starved——"

"Truly," interrupted Pedro gloomily. "Fish! May the devil eat all that are left in the sea!"

"When we strike out to sea, you will be begging the devil to throw you back a few," retorted his master. "We can't catch fish in the depths of the Mediterranean. The water casks on this galley must be refilled every two or three days—how shall we refill them on the open sea? It is you who have lost your noodle, Pedro. This frigate was placed here by Almighty God

in answer to our prayers. All He asks us to do is to take it!"

By the time the two had returned to the galley, Pedro was enlisted for the venture. Put up to the starving galley-slaves, the proposal, listened to at first in doubt, was shortly received with acclaim. They imbibed courage from their captain, whom Pedro had already given a great reputation among them, and the prospect of food and spoil supplied appetite for the undertaking.

With every step carefully planned, and instruction given to each man as to the part as was to play in the attack, John, in the dusk, set up his masts, broke out the Star and Crescent and the galley moved out to where it must be seen by the frigate.

A shot across their bow brought them to, and an officer and crew drew alongside to inspect the galley. Pedro now became spokesman. Don John, professing to be suddenly ill, went below. Pedro explained to the officer in the longboat that in trying to get to the Gulf of Lepanto they had been driven far out of their course by gales. That after leaving Mytilene, the plague had broken out among them with the result that they had lost half their men and their captain and boatswain now lay below in a dying condition. Their provisions having given out, they were half starved—might they have some food?

At mention of the plague, the commander in the longboat lost interest in the inspection and the boat put back to report. Confiding however in the merciful disposition of the frigate captain, the strange galley pulled in after the longboat, close to the frigate.

"In the name of the Prophet, throw us something to eat!" bellowed Pedro from the quarter-deck.

"Be off! and don't infect us," was the rude answer.

"But we can't navigate at night without our captain and boatswain. May we lie in the cove till daybreak?"

Some discussion aboard the frigate followed this. "You may," came the answer at length. "If you go blundering out, you might expose our position. Stow your masts and lie quiet or we will sink you."

In the darkness of the early morning, Don John and Pedro, followed by their hungry crew, boarded the frigate, stole upon the watch, and before successful defense could be made, the officers and crew had been silenced or despatched and the frigate was in the hands of the Spaniards.

The Christian galley slaves aboard the frigate gladly manned the oars for their captors; a big breakfast was served to the victors and to their discomfited prisoners. Pedro was put in charge of the galley and after filling the water butts, Don John, taking the quarter-deck of the frigate in the captain's uniform, stood boldly out to sea.

Two days later a sail was sighted. The Spaniards ran up the Star and Crescent and signalled it to heave to. It proved to be a Turkish treasure ship, separated by storm from its convoy. Don John sent word that this misfortune could be easily remedied as he himself would thenceforth supply a convoy.

When, however, a considerable boarding party, headed by Pedro, in the longboat, approached the treasure ship, the suspicious commander opened fire: the frigate answered with a broadside and under its cover the boarders gained the deck of the Turk and made captive such of the crew as were not put to the sword. Don John sent aboard a prize crew of his Marmora galley slaves, under the two Cypriots, and headed for Sicily. "Now, Pedro," said he to his one-eared lieutenant, "pray for fair weather."

One fine morning, early in the year 1571, all Messina awoke amazed to see at daybreak a Turkish frigate, treasure ship and galley standing in for the harbor.

The people of the city ran hither and yon in astonishment and confusion. The land batteries opened fire on the intruders, whereupon down came the Turkish colors from the peaks and up went the royal standard of Spain.

When Pedro, landing, first made known the return of Don John of Austria, he was looked on as a madman. Don John, the townsmen told him, was dead; and when he laughed, they were ready to seize him. Not until a longboat put out from the frigate and Don John himself stepped upon the landing stairs of the quay, did the excited populace receive and acclaim him as one risen indeed from the dead. Then the town, which loved him so—and loves his memory still—went wild over its hero.

His return from the grave was the sensation of Southern Europe. His Spanish enemies stood aghast and his friends went into a transport of rejoicing. He woke from the already strong tradition of an ignominious death and a grave unknown, to find himself famous—as he said, through misfortune. But this was not true: youthful as he was, his military record already pointed to the genius of command; and thinking men who had appraised his successes realized this.

Nowhere more than in Italy were his friends jubilant and in Italy nowhere more than in Rome where the great soldier Colonna sounded his praises.

Don John's first care was to despatch messengers to his brother, Philip II, apprising him of his capture and his escape from the hands of the Turks. With his message, he despatched a rich offering of Turkish

treasure from the captured ship. And besides the fortunate Christian slaves—returned to freedom with their pockets full of prize money—Pedro paraded Messina early and late in the magnificence of his own share of the enemy spoil.

But of all the incidents of the return from what had been thought the grave, the meeting between Don John and Sandro at Messina was the happiest. The young Prince of Parma arrived from Naples with a scouting squadron of Spanish galleys the day following Don John's return. The comrade adventurers met like devoted brothers instead of mere uncle and nephew. All the story was gone over: Sandro, forced to put to sea on account of the storm, had been compelled for a week thereafter to dodge enemy vessels and when he was again able to reach the coast rendezvous, all traces of Don John and Pedro had been lost. After getting back to Messina, Sandro's little squadron had been scattered. Don John's galley had been assigned to convoy service and in this service, finally captured and sunk by one of Ali Pasha's Turkish raiders; "Austria," the lion, had been apparently reserved as a curiosity for the Pasha himself, and Sandro, to his delight, now first learned that the pet was once more in the keeping of his devoted master.

From Don John's royal brother came, by a special commission, a message of affection, and a letter pointing out how menacing the situation had become for Christendom in the face of new Turkish threat; and how much his brother's counsel was now needed. To Don John's delight, the bearer of the message proved to be Requesens. He brought the most welcome news that Orgas had been deprived of command, following Requesens' strong representations concerning the truth about the action off Algiers and the despatch of Orgas'

ablest junior officer on a wild-goose chase to the Levant.

Don John laughed with the carelessness of youth over the happenings while he had been away. "Had I disappeared for a year, I should have returned to find myself an admiral of Spain."

"Not so fast, Excellency," returned Requesens, smiling in turn. "I am empowered to inform Your Excellency that you are already an admiral of Spain."

Don John stared at his friend incredulously.

Requesens repeated his words. "I am not jesting, my Admiral," he added. "Your Excellency has simply started on the path that should, and will, bring you sometime into your own."

Don John paused to collect himself. Then he commented drily, "Perez won't like this."

"Perez," returned Requesens, "has been dismissed, for this affair of Orgas'—and other scandalous conduct. Your commission is this day being engrossed at Madrid whither the King commands that you repair at once for conference and counsel."

CHAPTER XLV

WAR

Word had already reached Barcelona from Messina that Don John was on his homeward way; and when his Turkish frigate gaily dressed stood in for the Spanish port, thousands crowded the quays and piers to catch a glimpse of the returning hero. The forts and the shipping welcomed him with salvos of artillery; church bells rang and holiday was observed throughout the city. A happy moment came when Don John, stepping once more on Spanish soil, found among the first to greet him, his old retainers, Diego and Gaspar. Ignoring the claims of the array of civic officials for precedence, Don John with a laugh took the grizzled veterans in his arms and slipped a fat purse into each of their pockets. And the shouting crowd went wild.

The deputation from the Spanish monarch received his young brother as one risen from the dead. A day of thanksgiving was proclaimed; rejoicings were general throughout the Kingdom. Don John, not quite able to comprehend why he had become so important after so much neglect, held himself in restraint with his natural tact, and only expressed gratitude for the consideration shown him. The discomforture of his enemies he viewed without rancor; and the undimmed loyalty of his friends made his return a happy one.

The triumph of his home-coming had planted in the breast of Don John the hope of negotiating—through

the good offices of the most powerful of European monarchs, his brother Philip II—with the Porte at Constantinople, and the Vizier Pasha Ali, for his public espousal of Miriam.

He foresaw the mass of diplomatic difficulties that would arise, the international obstacles that would be urged against him; but he hoped, as every stern lover always has hoped, and always will, to win against the world the woman of his choice. And no one ever ventured to stigmatize this natural son of Charles V as faint-hearted either in the fields of love or of war.

Yet at this moment, when he wished to lay down his sword and pursue his treasured purpose, came a peremptory summons from the King directing him to repair with urgency to Madrid. He read and re-read the King's order with misgivings only too-well founded. What fresh emergency of state had arisen he could not surmise. The affairs of the King of the Spains and the Indies were too far-reaching and too complicated to be comprehended outside his cabinet. Yet of all the things that could happen through the ebb and flow of events, in a domain extending from the borders of the Pacific to the troubled waters of the Tyrrhenian sea, there had now come to pass that which of all other events would most disturb the dreams of the King's martial brother—war with the Turk.

CHAPTER XLVI

THE TURK STRIKES

In the spring of the year 1571, the Republic of Venice, the States of Italy and the Kingdom of Spain were aroused as they never before had been, to the threatened overthrow of European civilization at the hand of the barbarian who, a little more than a century earlier, had fixed his seat of empire in the palace of the Cæsars on the Bosphorus.

Human government, then, as now, a contemptible thing, had divided Europe into a group of warring nations, brutal in enmity, devoted in intrigue, consumed with envy and distracted by religious wars. It was to such a situation that the Turk brought his threat to conquer Europe and reduce it to his own barbarism.

From the Persian Gulf to the Irish Sea, his war galleys had pillaged peaceful countries, put to death their defenders and borne away their women to revitalise the racial strain of the Turk. From the Tigris to the Danube, Selim levied tribute; and the republics of Genoa and of Venice were forced from time to time to purchase peace on terms fixed at Constantinople.

The Turk was popularly regarded as a scourge of God, whose career of conquest it was hardly possible to check. And toward the last quarter of the sixteenth century his inroads upon Eastern Europe had ripened an almost universal fear into panic.

Of the Christian powers of the Mediterranean, the Republic of Venice lay most exposed to the assaults of

the Turk. She still clung, amid the wreck of her Eastern conquests, to one gem—the Isle of Cyprus.

In the year before the Battle of Lepanto, the drunken Selim, having conceived a great thirst for a wine produced on the Isle, pointed a pistol at the head of the prudent Doge of the Adriatic, and demanded that Cyprus be surrendered to him.

Venice revolted at the thought of handing over to the degenerate barbarian her last Oriental jewel; and knowing that she could not hope to withstand her powerful foe single-handed, she appealed for help to the powers of Europe.

But like a man whose reputation for honorable dealing has been compromised by his record, the appeal of Venice fell on deaf ears. When her neighbors had sought to withstand the Turk, Venice had been at peace with him. When the gallant Knights of Malta had resisted, in the most memorable defense recorded in history, the whole power of Solyman the Magnificent —while their Grand Master John de Vallette waged his fight with only 6000 men against a Turkish horde of 80,000; when he forced the proud Solyman to abandon his siege, after four months of slaughter— Venice held out no helping hand.

With the doors of Christendom thus closed more or less politely against the Republic, a Turkish fleet of more than three hundred sail headed for Cyprus.

It was in this dire emergency that the haughty Republic found a solitary friend whose inspired counsels were to prove the Nemesis of the insolent despot of the White Sea.

What aid, it might be asked, in so mighty a struggle, could be looked for from an infirm old man, whose land forces comprised a mere handful of soldiers and who could boast for a navy only two worn-out galleys?

Yet in this supreme crisis for Europe precisely this combination of great spiritual and feeble material resource was to deal to the magnificent power of the Turk a blow from which he long reeled and from which, indeed, he never wholly recovered.

There sat, in the year 1570, in the chair of St. Peter at Rome, a Dominican friar, long in humble service, who against his protesting tears and fervent entreaties had been forced by the Sacred College to take up the pontifical burden, under the title of his choosing, Pius V. It was this man, old and constantly tortured by a painful malady, who was to unite the jealous Christian powers in a League that should first defy and then vanquish the tyrant of the Mediterranean.

So insanely arrogant had Selim become that he aimed at nothing less than the subjugation of Italy, Spain and Christendom. The Ottoman potentate was a glutton, a drunkard and a devotee of every form of natural and unnatural sensual indulgence. With bloated cheeks and inflamed eyes, he spent his days and nights with the women, the boys and the Greek and Jewish parasites who ministered to his vices.

It was against this degraded monarch, one of the most powerful, if not the most powerful in the world in 1570, that the unknown Dominican teacher of theology was to be pitted for the mastery of Europe and its slowly-developed and hardly-won civilization.

But Selim had behind him the veteran military and naval leaders and formidable armament bequeathed to him by his father, Solyman the Magnificent. Pius V. had for himself only the feeble material forces already named and the enlisted resources of two Christian powers who deeply distrusted, if they did not actually hate, each other.

Yet Pius in the following year, 1571, united jealous

Venice and suspicious Spain with himself, into a Holy League against the Turk. In this, the signatories bound themselves to supply certain naval forces to oppose him at sea. The Turk had already invested Cyprus. Its city of Nicosia had fallen before him and its twenty thousand inhabitants had been barbarously put to the sword. When the signing of the League after endless discussions and heartbreaking delays had been accomplished in May, 1571, the little city and seaport of Famagosta had been under siege and blockade for more than eight months; and to oppose one hundred thousand Turks and a sea full of galleys, the immortal governor, Bragadino, had seven thousand men. But Bragadino was a soldier of stern stuff and maintained his gallant defense for months yet to come.

CHAPTER XLVII

THE GRAY MAN OF CHRIST

In Madrid, Don John was conducted at once to the royal presence. Philip first of all expressed his gratitude for the signal military services Don John had rendered the Kingdom; and added his personal congratulations on the reputation his young brother had made for himself as a leader of proven ability. From this, His Majesty opened the germane subject of the conference itself.

"I must now tell you," said the King, evenly, "what will be publicly known to-morrow; that I have consented, most reluctantly, to enter into a league with the Venetians to oppose the Turk. I have done so only at the urgent instance of the Holy Father who insists that Europe is facing an alarming crisis in the affairs of Christendom; and that if at least a minority of Christian powers does not unite to combat the Turk, the battle with the Moors to preserve for Spain its own civilization, will have been fought in vain. He tells me plainly that unless Christendom resists the Sultan now, the banner of the Crescent, with its crossed scimitars, will replace on every headland of our beloved Mediterranean, the Cross of Constantine.

"You know the Venetians," continued Philip calmly, "their cold duplicity, their callous indifference to every appeal that does not further their own selfish interests. Even now—to-day—they are still flirting with the arrogant Turk, trying to coax him into a peace

that shall save their own skins—playing their old game of piecing out the skin of the Lion with the tail of the Fox—regardless of how Christendom may suffer by their duplicity. They have not, thus far, succeeded at Constantinople. Swollen with pride and drunk with power, Selim will listen to no terms that they can concede without cutting their own throats.

"They will be forced to fight; and I, if my Kingdom and the civilization of Christendom mean anything to me—and they do—am forced to take up arms with a slippery ally against a common enemy. Understand well, then, my brother, that I have entered into what may prove a dread war indeed for Europe as well as for Spain, solely for the reasons that I have recounted. I have undertaken one-half the staggering costs of the enterprise and placed my resources in the hands of the Holy League—for so we have designated the forces of Spain, Rome and Venice which are to oppose the villainies of the Turk.

"In this crucial situation, which has cost me many sleepless nights, I have been forced to canvass the lists of my military leaders for one to head my forces against the enemy. And in my perplexity concerning a choice I have in the end turned, my brother, to none other than you, yourself——"

Don John started. "To me?" he echoed, thunderstruck.

"To you," continued Philip, unmoved. "And to-day I have named you Commander-in-Chief of my naval and land forces, for this campaign of the Holy League."

Too overcome at the moment to speak, Don John could only listen in silence until, collecting himself, he could interpose disclaimers of his own fitness and suggest the names of others better fitted by years and

experience to undertake so heavy a responsibility. In this effort the first name that came to his lips for such a post, was that of Requesens.

The King smiled drily, very drily. "I have been," said he, "in conference three whole days with Requesens. It was he who, in the end, convinced me that my own judgment was based, not on my desire to confer an honor on my brother, but on the more solid ground that having shown every promise of developing the military genius of our common father, you, of all others, are the man to head the forces of Spain."

The brothers sat down at luncheon together. The King reverted to the topic uppermost in his mind. "I need not admonish you that your post will be surrounded with many difficulties besides danger from the Turk. Doria will, of course, be monstrously jealous of the choice I have made. You will need all of your tact to smooth his ruffled feathers. Who will be chosen commander-in-chief of the allied forces, is not yet determined—France," he added grimly, "hopes it never may be determined. But if the voice of the Venetians prevails, they will doubtless put forward their bluff old sea-dog, Sebastian Veniero. He is both old and irascible but he is a fighter; and he will never sell you out—something that cannot be said of many men, to-day. And I am sure you will get on either with him or with that high-spirited Roman, Marcantonio Colonna, commander of the Papal forces, should the coveted honor be conferred on him. He is thirty-five years old—and you are young, my brother."

"Twenty-four, Your Majesty," answered Don John.

"Young, indeed. But I have long felt that the martial temperament of our father is yours. At least, I have long known it was not mine," he added with a sorry smile.

The news of the naming by the King of his natural brother, to the long discussed supreme Spanish command spread fast, not alone over Spain, but over a great part of Europe.

Yet this was but the first of three decisions in the counsels of the Christian allies, which were to impose still graver responsibilities on the young soldier of the House of Austria.

The question as to who should be named to head the combined naval forces of the Holy League against the redoubtable Turk, was still to be decided. Venice claimed the honor in virtue of its paramount interests and widespread influence in the Levant, while the Spanish commissioners urged the dignity of Europe's powerful monarch, the princely rank of his brother already named as chief of Spain's forces, and finally the munificence of their master in engaging to answer for one-half the costs of the campaign.

Pius V was too wise to proffer the claims of his Roman hero, Marcantonio Colonna, since his own material contribution to the campaign was slight; and he knew too well the inordinate jealousies of human nature to expect the rival powers of Venice and Spain to yield their pretensions and accept a leadership based on so insignificant a numerical force as he could muster. The Gray Man of Christ wisely preferred no claim of his own.

Yet it was to him that the vital question of choice of the generalissimo was finally referred for decision. The powers that could not trust each other could trust him.

He had at least four names to choose from. His own Marcantonio Colonna, a dashing soldier—at the moment thirty-five, tall and dignified, courteous in manner, of a cool temper and ready and eloquent in

speech, brave and loyal, skilled in his profession and in the ways of the world and thoroughly in earnest in the work upon which he had entered.

Next, he had Gianandrea Doria, the Genoese commander of Philip's Sicilian fleet, nephew of the great Andrea, and the principal private shipowner of his time. Thirty-one years old, in person eminently disagreeable, being lean and ungraceful in figure, with a high, sharp head, sunken eyes and a swollen underlip.

Sebastian Veniero, the Venetian hero, had grown old in the service of his country. His shaggy hair and beard were snow-white, but his eye was undimmed and his mental and physical vigor were unimpaired.

There remained only in the first rank of possibilities for leadership, the name of the young prince-adventurer of the House of Austria. Could it indeed be prudently urged that this name belonged in the first rank of the claimants? In the navy he had strikingly demonstrated what he could do if given a free hand. And despite his youth the eyes of Europe's military observers were already turned on him. The Venetian envoy drew his picture thus:

"He is of middle stature, well made, of a most beautiful countenance and of admirable grace. He has little beard but a large moustache of a light color; he wears his hair long and turned upward which becomes him greatly; he dresses sumptuously and with such nicety that it is a marvel to see him. Active and skilful, he has no rival in the management of horses and in jousting, in all kinds of military sports and tournaments. His Excellency is wise and very prudent, eloquent, wary and dextrous in business, knowing well how to dissemble and how to use courtesy to all kinds of persons. He is well versed in fortifications and artillery and speaks of little else than warlike enterprise——"

Such, then, was the available human material at the disposal of Pius V—since raised to the altars of the Church—from which to name a leader in the acute crisis confronting Europe.

The able statesman of the Vatican had in his perplexities—and perhaps no sovereign was ever confronted with greater—but one resource to enlist, one weapon to unsheathe in his undertakings—that of prayer. And to prayer he committed this question, so fraught with responsibility for that Christendom of which despite its appalling dissensions he was still spiritual ruler.

On the 6th of June, Don John with his attendants set forth from Madrid to Italy. When he went to bid his beautiful foster-mother, Doña Magdalena, goodbye, his tears mingled with hers. She had but recently buried her devoted warrior-husband and Don John's revered mentor, Don Luis. In parting she gave Don John a precious memento of his father's faithful servant. She took from a drawer a crucifix. It was a strange looking object in that it had evidently been through a fire. One arm of it had been entirely burned away. "My dear son," said Doña Magdalena, "take this with you whenever you go into danger. Don Luis rescued it—as you see it—from a sacrilegious bonfire into which a party of Moorish infidels had cast it. It will serve to remind you of a brave servant of your father and a devoted friend to you."

Of Don John's complete household of twenty-one, ranging from his great chamberlain to his cook, some had preceded him, some accompanied him, and some followed him. Riding post, his party tarried that night at Guadalajara. Resuming their journey after dinner on Friday they rode all night the naked plains of Castile, resting at Arcos on the frontier of Aragon.

Day was breaking when the towers of Carmen rose faintly outlined to the eyes of the travellers against the eastern horizon. Poignant memories tore at the heart-strings of the soldier.

Where she had lived and breathed, where she had gladdened the earth and life with her presence, he tarried to hear a requiem said; to kneel at a too-well-remembered grave; to offer a prayer for the repose of a soul dear to him, and to ask the prayers of the same precious soul for himself and for one patiently awaiting him in a land far distant, and under a flag dedicated to the destruction of his country and the extermination of his faith.

From Arcos, Don John travelling by way of Saragossa, continued his devotions at the famous shrine of Our Lady of Montserrat; and thence to Barcelona, where he was again received with every signal honor. Here he inspected the vessel commanded by Juan Vazquez Coronada, Knight of Malta, which was designated as his flagship, and entered on his new duties. The galley was already named the Royal and had been built three years earlier, of strong yet light Catalonian pine. Its lofty poop was rich with the delicate carvings of Vazquez.

He summoned Requesens and his own secretary, de Soto, and after a conference despatched orders to the Marquess of Santa Cruz to bring up his galleys from Cartagena. Don Gil de Andrade, commanding the harbor squadron was directed to get up his supplies of biscuit and Don Sancho de Leyva, at Mallorca with another squadron, was ordered to hold himself in readiness. And as soon as the round of entertainment could be cut short, Don John sailed for Genoa, with his fleet of forty-seven galleys.

In Genoa, he was lodged in the great palace of the

Dorias, where his own father, Charles V, had more than once been entertained. And here he met the envoys of Venice, Rome and his own Spain who had assembled to convey to him a weighty message. Received in the great hall of the palace, their spokesman, Paolo Tiepolo, the ambassador of Venice to Spain, now first advised the astounded prince that he had actually been named to the supreme command of the united fleets of Venice, Rome and Spain for the campaign against the Lord of the Turks.

Stupefied by the announcement, Don John sat in a momentary daze. The proudest post within the gift of the crowned heads of Europe lay in his hands.

But better than those who proffered the coveted honor, the young commander knew what its acceptance meant. Better than any present rival for the great distinction, he knew the formidable strength of the forces and the armament lying in wait to complete the conquest of the White Sea. He knew likewise only too well, whose scimitar he must oppose with his sword —that of the renowned vizier commander, Ali Pasha, not alone formidable as a foe, not alone known as "bravest of the brave"—but father of the woman dearest to him in the world.

He asked time to think. "Your Excellency," pleaded Tiepolo, for Venice felt the emergency most keenly, "there is no longer time to think. I have been waiting here, patiently, for one whole month, your arrival; the Turk is already abroad."

Don John, plainly, was deeply moved. His features reflected his perplexity as he shook his head. "Your Highnesses have other—and I may say without hesitation—more experienced, abler leaders to choose from —men more mature."

The Venetian under the strain of great emotion cut

off the protest. "Your Excellency," he pleaded with all the earnestness he could command, "before the Sovereign Republic of Venice, your own royal brother, monarch of the Spains and the Indies, and the High Court of Rome could be brought to agree on a commander other than yourself for the combined fleets of the League, the die of Europe's destiny would be fatally cast."

With the Venetian embassy came, too, a Greek spy in the Seigniory's employ, who, travelling at all speed, reported from Constantinople that the Turkish fleet had sailed.

Don John, presenting an attitude of dignity, with such composure as he was able to summon, still insisted on his lack of fitness. "Does Your Highness realize," he asked, "that I am very young?"

"The greater the honor," urged the ready Venetian. "Europe, Your Excellency, places in your hands the fate of her civilization, her women and her children, of Christendom itself."

"In placing this issue in my hands," exclaimed Don John, his face lighting sternly as he addressed the company, "do you, all, abide for better or for worse by its result?"

"Your Excellency," came their voices in unison, "we do."

"And who," demanded the Spaniard still coldly, "has first put upon my shoulders this unwelcome responsibility?"

"Your Excellency," answered Tiepolo, "the decision, after many anxious days, was left in the hands of the Holy Father. It was he who named you!"

Don John started. "Is it thus?" he demanded with emotion. And after a moment: "God then has willed it—so be it!"

"And this," murmured the unwilling leader, with bitterness, to himself, as he pillowed his head that night in the royal suite of the Doria palace, "is the issue of my foolish hopes—war! And her father and I, foremost in it!"

It was long before sleep quieted his troubled thoughts.

But at last, he stood again on Miriam's villa terrace. The moon was rising full and into a clear sky across beautiful Marmora. He breathed the languorous fragrance of the magnolia bloom and the orange blossom. He heard the dreamy murmur of distant voices on the waters; he listened to the trill of the bulbul. And then —most poignant—the low silvery laugh and the stolen whispers of a delicate girl—the accents of a voice, to him unlike any other in the world—caressed his ear. And again he clasped Miriam in his arms.

But again, his hand grasped a drawn scimitar. The hoarse alarm, the crackle of musketry and the thunder of cannon rang in his ears. Amid the screams and yells of conflict he hastily lowered his visor—lover no longer, but soldier face to face and at death grips with the great Pasha himself—Miriam weeping at his side.

CHAPTER XLVIII

THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

Don John next day secluded himself from callers. One alone, towards evening, escaped the general interdict. The private chamberlain brought in the name of Alessandro, Prince of Parma.

Don John greeted his nephew joyfully. "Sandro!" he exclaimed. "Who could be more welcome!"

"Where could I more wish to be welcome!" cried the gay cavalier. "I am hot from the saddle, High and Mighty One——"

"Spare the big words—" interrupted Don John.

"But I have reason for them, more than Your Highness knows," protested Sandro. "Briefly, I am just by post from Rome. Briefly, you were to-day proclaimed Commander-in-Chief of the allied naval forces. To-morrow you are to be proclaimed Captain General of the League, in command *both* of the naval and the land forces. Holy Father—I had it from his lips—has decided that you are to be supreme in both elements! Excellency!" exclaimed the Prince, his brown eyes flashing with exaltation. "What a wonderful old man speaks to-day from the Vatican! What a saint—in his very presence you feel the inspiration of sanctity.

"He spoke almost lovingly of Your Highness. Yet something he said left me very sober."

"What could possibly make you very sober, Sandro?"

"Do you believe in the gift of prophecy?"

Don John shrugged his shoulders.

"You would, if you ever met him," continued Parma seriously. "When he spoke so affectionately of you, I ventured to say, 'Your Holiness must receive him—for you will like him.'

" 'He is already to me,' he replied, 'as a son.' Then his sunken eyes lighted and he raised them high. 'He will triumph over the infidel; yes. But,' he added and there was a sadness in his words, 'I shall never look into his face; nor he into mine.'

"My gay uncle," continued the princeling nephew, recovering his spirits, "when will they canonize the *House of Austria?* That's the only chance *I* shall ever have——"

"Say we——"

"—of getting to the altars. Curse all sinners——"

"Even God doesn't do that."

"They may not bother Him as much as they do me. They are such a damned, busy, troublesome lot—but hard to keep clear of. By the way, my uncle, have you a job for me?"

"What sort, Sandro?"

"Serving up Janissaries for dinner. I'm tired of capon and chestnuts."

"Do you really want to go?"

"What am I here for?"

"You shall be my aid, Sandro. We'll ride the White Sea together, and your work begins at once."

"But I forgot to tell you! A noble Roman is to be your second in command——"

"I can guess his name."

"Marcantonio Colonna!"

"Julius Cæsar couldn't ask a better. Dine with me to-night, Sandro."

"Oh, but the banquet!"

Don John's face fell. "The banquet—sure enough!"

"Fifty-two ladies of the greatest houses of Genoa, all in crimson and white satin, eyes flashing, lovely glances, white bosoms glittering," exclaimed Parma, his own eyes sparkling and his mouth watering at the mere prospect.

"More dangerous to you than the arrows of the Turks," interposed Don John.

"Have a care yourself, my uncle! They are waiting to-night to welcome you to Genoa, and to speed you on your way to Constantinople."

"Then you shall banquet with me, Sandro. A fine chance we have," he added cynically, "for canonization, with dishes such as these to whet the appetite. A plague on their dinners and dances."

But once in the gaiety, Don John did not shirk his responsibility. The scene was enough to turn older heads than those of young princes. All that wealth, all that beauty and feminine charm when inspired by men and gallantry, could lend to the splendor of the great Doria palace, was there. A magnificent masked ball followed the banquet. The famous Cesare Negri acted as master of ceremonies, and the young Captain-General of the Holy League captivated his hosts. A keen-eyed Venetian wrote home that everyone was surprised and delighted by the spirited and graceful dancing of the Generalissimo.

At daybreak, Don John sailed for Naples, touching at Spezia, Port Ercole and Civita Vecchia, casting anchor at Naples on August 9th.

Besides Sandro, he was attended by a noble company of Italian youngsters ready to wrest fame from the cannon's mouth, among them Francesco, son of Guidobaldo, Duke of Urbino, and Francesco de Medici, Prince of Tuscany. Gay Naples gave the fleet a royal reception.

On the 10th of August, the feast of St. Lawrence and a high festival for Spain and its dependencies, Don John, in a dress of gold and crimson tissue with a white velvet mantle trimmed with gold, a white plume and a crimson scarf, occupied the seat of honor in the coach of Cardinal Granvelle, *ad interim* governor of the Kingdom, and was followed along the crowded quays from the port to the palace by a long and splendid train of nobles.

A week went to the embarking of troops and supplies, and on the 20th, Don John put to sea for Messina with thirty-five galleys, the remainder being held under Santa Cruz, who superintended operations at the port.

On the evening of the 23rd, Messina was sighted and amid the thunders of artillery from fleet and port, Colonna and the white-haired Veniero hastened from the harbor to greet their youthful chief.

Messina had been chosen as the rendezvous for the combined fleets and here the ships, troops and the enormous quantities of needed supplies were assembled. The princes of Italy almost alone, among the royalties of Europe, had responded nobly to the appeals of the Holy Father for aid in the campaign against the Turk.

Impatient though he was to get directly toward the enemy, Don John recognized the necessity of the careful conditioning, before sailing, of his hybrid forces and of observing at all times the formalities of state etiquette with his punctilious and super-sensitive associates. One of his signal claims to the qualities of a leader, is the fact that the young man succeeded in keeping the peace, even to the climax, between the jealous and suspicious Spaniards and Venetians all of ages above his own.

At Messina his first care was to despatch two swift sailing galleys, one under a Spaniard and one under a Venetian, to cruise eastward and report back on the position and strength of the enemy.

A curious circumstance was that his most devoted counselors, seasoned veterans of numerous wars, spent their energies in warning Don John that his own men were raw recruits, hardly knowing how to discharge their firelocks. A trusted adviser wrote the young Generalissimo that the Turks had an abundance of seasoned soldiers, whom he himself should not like to meet without the veterans of the Spanish army, then engaged in Flanders. He begged Don John not to lead the fleet into any position where the Turk could force a battle. A defeat, he pointed out, would do far more harm than a victory could do good. "For the love of God," he added in his letter, "consider well what a great affair this is and the damage that may be caused by a mistake."

Such, indeed, was the consensus of Spanish opinion, and the policy of caution and delay was strongly echoed by two Italian papal commanders. Their argument was that the fleet of the League was not strong enough to encounter that of the Turk; and they upheld their contention in a paper addressed to Don John and widely circulated. The indignant Marcantonio Colonna wondered how these men dared endeavor thus to chill the resolution of their Commander-in-Chief and thwart the wishes of the Holy Father who, though distracted at home by pain, maintained the courage of the David whom he had sent forth to battle.

The astute young leader, however, summoned from time to time all of his subordinates to counsel with him. Every man's opinion was listened to and weighed. And a second claim to greatness may be granted him

in that none of the atmosphere of jealousy, misgiving and dissension in which he was enveloped daunted him. Having heard all, he himself decided. A less resolute soldier might have been intimidated by conditions revealed to him through his own eyes. "Yesterday," he wrote his veteran Spanish adviser Toledo, "I began to visit the galleys of the Venetians. You cannot believe what bad order both sailors and soldiers were in. Arms and artillery they certainly have: but as fighting is not to be done without men, a certain spasm takes me when I see with what materials I am expected by the world to do something of importance. . . . No order seems to prevail among them and each galley appears to come and go as its captain pleases. Tell me," he asked in conclusion, "in case of battle is it better to be the first to fire or not? My intimates are debating the question."

In answer the grizzled veteran spoke well. "Those troopers are right who say your arquebus should not be fired until you are near enough to be splashed by the blood of your enemy; and I have heard the most knowing sea captains say, that the crashing of the ship's iron beak and the first report of her guns should be heard together, and I think so, too. But your people should be taught not to be considering the enemy, or who shall fire first or last, but to fire when Your Highness gives the word, and then only."

What great soldier has ever given other advice or better? And this invalid Spanish captain, too old to fight, had in his correspondent, an apt pupil.

At Messina, the fleet was daily augmented by fresh arrivals and when the forces of each confederate were declared complete, Don John passed them in review.

He found himself at the head of the greatest Chris-

tian naval armament ever up to that time assembled. Upwards of three hundred sail and eighty thousand men looked to him for orders. Of these, his Spanish fleet comprised ninety galleys, twenty-four large ships and fifty frigates and brigantines. The Venetians numbered one hundred and six galleys, six galeasses, two heavy ships and twenty frigates. Twelve galleys and six frigates formed the Roman squadron—totalling two hundred and eight galleys, thirty-two larger vessels and seventy-six frigates—in all three hundred and sixteen sail. The mariners and galley slaves numbered upwards of fifty thousand, the troops about thirty thousand—eight thousand Spaniards, five thousand Italians, six thousand Germans in the pay of the King of Spain; and five thousand Italians supplied by Venice. Lastly, and not of least interest, three thousand Italians in small bands of not above one hundred and fifty—many of them noble volunteers—had enrolled under splendid Italian princes, who had staked the flower of their young manhood and their own personal fortunes on the repulse of the common enemy of Europe.

Following the review, Don John sent for Colonna and Veniero.

"Gentlemen," he said to them in private conference, "our forces are assembled. They will never be in better stomach for fight than they are now. We have had the roar of cannon to stir us, the enthusiasm of the really magnificent fiesta to inspire us, the eyes of our beautiful women to fire our hearts—certainly a fitting overture to the work ahead. I feel now, gentlemen, that we should sail to find and engage the enemy. I have summoned you to confer on this point."

Veniero, in deference to his age and the fine tact of

the much younger Colonna, spoke first. "Your Excellency," he said gruffly, jerking his left shoulder to emphasize his words, "I have on the point you name, but one opinion—you have expressed it—Let us have action!"

Don John turned to the Roman. "And you, Marcantonio?"

"Action," echoed Colonna tersely. "Let it be swift and vigorous. And I speak for my colleague, as well as myself, when I implore Your Highness not to listen to the Fabians who would paralyze our efforts with their unending pleas for delay. Caution! Prudence! Delay! Danger! Bah! I am sick to death of the words!"

"We agree happily then," said Don John, "on the first and great point. I will now lay the question before a full council of war."

"So be it," exclaimed Colonna, rising.

"But no!" thundered Veniero. "Since the question has already been settled, why reopen it before a council of noddies? Talk, talk, talk!"

Don John smiled. "Padre mio!" he exclaimed deferentially. "Since we decide, may they not talk? It will do us no harm," he added with a slight laugh, "and do them some good."

"If I succeed in keeping the peace among my own until I can engage the enemy," remarked Don John thoughtfully to Requesens that night at dinner, "I shall have won at least a slight victory. Most of them are ready now to tear at one another's throats. I have given the right wing to Doria—much as I hated to do it and Veniero is frothing at the mouth——"

"Why did you do it?"

Don John shrugged his shoulders. "Orders from Madrid—political considerations. I don't blame Sebas-

tino or Marcantonio for frothing. But politics is politics."

The council of war was held September 10th aboard Don John's flagship, the Royal. Seventy persons participated. The facts as known were submitted to the council and the question of attacking the Turk was laid before them. Veniero, Colonna and such of their colleagues as they could line up with them spoke vigorously for immediate action. Doria and his following of Spaniards and Italians repeated their plea for great caution and further delay.

Don John rose and in a few eloquent words announced his complete accord with Venice and Rome. "Gentlemen," he said in conclusion, "I have decided to sail forthwith and bring the Turk to battle. The Mediterranean is a large body of water, and we are put, somewhat, in the position of looking for a needle in a haystack. But the needle we seek is very sharp, and we must be prepared at any moment to encounter its thrust. In order to prepare every ship in the fleet for immediate action, and in order to allow the free play of the artillery on the forecastle and the gangway, it is my order that all spurs and superstructures above the prows of the galleys, be removed. And you, gentlemen, will give the further necessary orders to see that this is done, on all vessels, *without exception,* before we leave the harbor of Messina. I do not invite discussion on this point, because it is not to be discussed: my orders are to be executed as given. And I ask in conclusion: Are you all with me?"

A roar of applause answered his appeal. Swords flashed in air and throats swelled with expressions of loyalty. The Generalissimo was moved. "Then," said he, regarding his officers with smiling and misty eyes, "make ready. It rests with God to give us victory!"

CHAPTER XLIX

THE UNSEEN ALLY

One man was not present at that council—the Gray Man of Christ.

But in his Vatican retreat he was forging arms undreamed of by the Turk—the arms of fasting and of prayer. He had already appointed at Rome a triduum, three days of supplication that God would defend his people, and himself walked barefooted and bareheaded in the procession that marked its close, his snow-white beard falling over his breast and tears streaming from his sunken eyes. He had proclaimed for the whole Christian world a jubilee for the success of the war. He had been imploring the interest of the Blessed Virgin in their common cause and had presented to Marcantonio after High Mass in his chapel, a standard of red damask, embroidered with a crucifix and the legend:

In Hoc Signo Vinces

His inspired judgment backed that of his three captains, to attack. "If," he wrote Don John, despatching his message by a legate, "relying on divine rather than human aid, you engage the enemy, God will not be wanting to his own cause. And I look for a happy issue of our design, not relying on any light or random hope but on a divine guidance and the anticipations of many holy men."

The commanders, he enjoined to sift out their men. Criminals, sodomites, and men of evil lives were to be rigidly excluded from the fleet before sailing; swearing, gaming, riot and plunder were to be repressed. Don John slammed his fist down on the cabin table when the legate read the words. "The Holy Father is right," he exclaimed, emphatically, to his assembled staff. "None of *us* can throw stones at the others. But if we are going in His Name to meet the enemy of Christ our Lord and King, let us, if we don't want to make a farce of it, at least go clean!"

Three days of fast were proclaimed for the fleet, beginning with the Nativity of Our Lady; and all, officers and men, went to confession and received holy communion. Pius proclaimed anew the extraordinary spiritual privileges aforetime conferred on the conquerors of the Holy Sepulchre. To Don John he sent by Odescalchi, Bishop of Penna, two particular messages. The first recalled a forgotten prophecy uttered nine hundred years earlier by St. Isadore of Spain who had predicted the present League, headed by a Spanish leader against the enemy of the Spanish and the Christian name. The second, held out to the young commander hope of an independent crown as a reward of the triumph which the Pope believed was to come.

Perhaps no great array of fighting sinners ever went forth to battle cleaner in heart than those who sailed with Don John from Messina. So different were they from the rabble of his Morisco campaign that their Generalissimo was able to write: "The enemy is stronger in number of vessels but not so, I believe, in quality either of vessels or men." And when he penned these words he had not underestimated those ferocious warriors of Selim whom they were fated to engage,

nor the unwelcome rumors still persisting that Ali Pasha commanded them.

When the Venetian and Roman forces had joined those of Spain at the Messina rendezvous, Don John with full pomp reviewed the combined fleets, and the enthusiasm that greeted him augured well for his momentous undertaking. Carelessness in saluting, however, resulted in the death of several men. Further incidents of this sort were prevented by a general order that the captain of a galley on which such shots were fired should answer to the Commander-in-Chief with his life.

On the evening of September 15th, wind and weather favoring, the great ships, carrying large number of troops, put out to sea. On the morning of the 16th, the whole forest of masts which had so long filled the harbor of Messina was in motion. Surrounded by his imposing staff of churchmen assembled at the end of the mole, a nuncio of the Holy Father—as galley after galley, decked with every flag and pennant, swept out into the straits—bestowed on them a parting benediction; the solemn moment reminding the grim heroes that many of them were looking for the last time on the sunny sky, the blue waters and the green groves of beautiful Sicily.

Shouts deep with gratitude, reverent with love of cause and country, hoarse with menace to the barbarian enemy, rang and echoed from ship to ship and shore to shore toward the great Crucifix raised on the mole to bless them. The continuing roar of fifty thousand throats rose in a mighty volume, as vessel followed vessel out upon the deep. Could the long, low, rolling thunder of that roar have echoed in the drunken ears of the degenerate sot in the palace of the Cæsars on the Bosphorus, could they have penetrated the stupor

of his unnatural orgies and opened his bloodshot eyes to the future, how they had banished that torpor of security in which he and his parasites wallowed! Messina, its sparkling sun, its dancing waters, soft green groves and heaven-kissed hills, never before saw a morning such as that; never saw such a morning again.

Last of all the receding flotilla, and most conspicuous in it, sailed the stately flagship of the Commander-in-Chief, the Royal, with its lofty poop and bold colorings. There had been deep in the heart of Don John when he first beheld the beauty of the galley at Barcelona—and it came again into his heart as he stood out from Messina and headed toward the rising sun—the thought: "If I can but bring back, in this ship and in this cabin, my Miriam!"

In the Royal, Don John carried four hundred picked Sardegnians of the infantry regiments of Lope de Figueroa and Miguel de Monçada.

The most specific instructions were then issued from the Commander to the Captains of every vessel in the fleet, both as to their order of sailing and especially as to their dispositions in the event of a surprise attack from the enemy. A vanguard of eight swift-sailing galleys under Don Juan de Cardona, general of the Sicilian squadron, was ordered to keep eight miles ahead of the main fleet and to fall back on it in case of discovering the enemy.

The right wing of fifty-four galleys was commanded by Doria; his galley carried a broad green pennant at the peak of the mainyard, smaller pennants of the same color being displayed in other positions by all vessels of the division.

The centre, under Don John of Austria, comprised sixty-four galleys, with blue pennants flying at the masthead. The left wing of fifty-three galleys under

the Venetian Barbarigo, was identified by yellow banderoles on the foreyard, that of the commander being flown from the peak of the mainyard. A reserve of thirty galleys was held under the Marquess of Santa Cruz behind the battle line. They bore white pennants from flagstaffs over the stern lamps, that of Santa Cruz being flown from the mainyard's peak. The six galeasses under Francisco Duodo—huge, unwieldy, helpless, floating fortresses, but formidable in armament—sailed in pairs and were to be assigned to the three divisions of the line, the galleys undertaking in turn, when necessary, the duty of towing them.

Besides being separated into divisions, the Lepanto galleys were ordered to keep far enough apart to allow the free play of the oars, yet close enough together to prevent an enemy galley from passing through the gaps; while the spaces between divisions were not to exceed four or five galleys' length.

Don John's orders were so comprehensive, so searching in anticipated contingency, that it may be said no force ever entered a naval action better fortified by its commander. The utmost caution was to be observed in husbanding the artillery fire until it was certain to be effectual and the fire of at least two guns in each galley was to be reserved for close quarters.

Santa Cruz was to bring up his reserve wherever needed. The great but unwieldy ships of Arguello, transports in fact, were to form a separate squadron to be used wherever the Commander felt he could do most damage. Bad weather must be provided for; if he could not get his big hulks into action, Arguello's orders were to lower and man his boats; and these, with musketeers in each, were to row to the engaged galleys and take orders from the nearest captain. Even the light frigates were each armed with two small can-

non and carried ten musketeers under a corporal. These vessels were to lie astern the galleys to render aid or to be sent against the lighter vessels of the Turk.

During the hectic days of grand entertainment, and highly important conferences at Messina, Pedro had scarcely found time to get a word with Don John. With the exception, however, of one nasty fight, at Messina, with a Venetian boatswain who ventured to assert that Sebastian Veniero, the graybeard hero of Venice, was a greater captain than any Spaniard that ever lived, Pedro had kept out of the barber-surgeon's hands, lived in quiet, and succeeded in bossing the forecastle on the flagship, without incident, though not without jealousy on the part of Diego and Gaspar.

On the day after the fleet sailed, he begged permission, and obtained it, to speak to Don John on the quarterdeck.

"What is it?" demanded his master.

Pedro, cap in hand, and combing his hair with his fingers affectionately over the stub of his missing ear, proffered his grievance: "Highness," he said, respectfully, "I have not yet been assigned to any job on this ship. All these fellows around here are telling me what they are going to do, and asking me what I'm going to do; it is getting embarrassing."

Don John, having heard that Pedro was noising it around the crew that he was the personal bodyguard of the Commander-in-Chief, looked at him gravely. "Pedro, as I have told you, I am holding you in reserve as my bodyguard."

Pedro took the humor seriously. "No job I could like better. But none of these scurvy fellows will believe me when I tell them I am your bodyguard. Words follow when I say this and differences of opinion lead to blows."

Don John regarded the strange fellow not unkindly. "So you want an assignment," he mused. "What can you do?"

Pedro waved his hand. "Anything, Highness."

The Commander smiled. "That's just the trouble. But as I remember, Pedro, when we had that little affair with the pirate off the harbor, you sighted a gun pretty well. How about the artillery?"

Pedro jumped at the suggestion. "It would suit me exactly."

"Good; you shall have a gun, and a bow gun, this very day."

As the fleet rounded the heel of Italy, rumors and conflicting reports concerning the whereabouts of the enemy began to reach the fleet. The scouting squadron brought positive word that the Turkish armament after landing and doing some damage at Corfu, had steered southward. Shortly after, a bark from Gallipoli brought word that Aluch Ali, the Scald-head, had, two days before, been seen near Otranto with twenty-four galleys; and had apparently steered toward Barbary. Fears were aroused that the Ottoman fleet had dispersed and thus dashed its enemy's hope of a great battle. But that night a falling star of transcendent magnitude filled the heavens with light and bursting into three meteors seemed to portend some signal event; it brought great hope to the men.

The equinox was now upon them. Violent north winds held the fleet at Le Colonne above Cape Stilo for four days, with captains and men chafing at every hour's delay.

Pedro, in his brave uniform, hung around Don John whenever the master left the quarter-deck. "Pedro," shot Don John at him one day, with the wind blowing a gale, "have you seen the Turk?"

Pedro was busy about his gun. "He's not in range yet, Your Highness. When we *did* have him in range, if you remember, we had no gun with us.

"How soon do you look for him?" asked Sandro, who knew the adventurer's status with the Commander-in-Chief.

The sailor shook his head. "I've watched many a pot on this old Mediterranean, Highness, but I've seen few boil."

"Tell us at least when we are to be rid of this accursed weather."

"Somebody—" volunteered Pedro sententiously, "more likely a Venetian—has put a cat under a tub somewhere in one of the galleys; that's what ran the Maltese flagship on the rock yesterday; and it's what's holding us back."

Toward evening of that day, September 24th, the wind abating somewhat, the fleet put out again to sea. But Don John had learned on the same day from one of his scouting galleys that eight days earlier the Turk had sailed from Prevesa, of painful memory to a Christian host, in the direction of Zante.

At dawn on the 26th, the mountains of Corfu were sighted and after a day's struggle with adverse winds, the fleet, on the 27th of September, entered the harbor of Corfu.

Here the Commander landed to inspect the damage done some days earlier by the enemy. In every church they found broken crucifixes, desecrated altars, and pictures of saints, done in the best schools in Venice, with the holy features slashed by scimitars and the eyes made targets for bullets.

But in a sally from the fortress, during the attack, the defenders had captured a noted renegado whom the Pasha was glad to ransom for ten thousand crowns

and the release of two captains of Venetian galleys. From these officers, Don John learned by questioning that the Ottoman fleet numbered one hundred and sixty excellent galleys which together with galliots, brigantines and other craft amounted to three hundred sail.

"Now, gentlemen," continued Don John, to check up other reports, "tell me: Who is Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish fleet?"

His informants answered together: "Haley Bashaw!"

"Ali Pasha!" echoed Don John, understanding well the dialect.

"The same, Your Highness." The rumors, then, that had reached Messina were true.

"You could not be mistaken?" he asked gravely, yet not hoping for better news.

"Your Highness, we saw him at Prevesa reviewing his fleet."

Don John, still serious, gave no indication of his thoughts. The die was cast. He was soon to meet as the head of the accursed forces of the drunken Sultan—Ali, Miriam's parent: he, devoted to his only daughter, as she, to her stern, handsome, gallant father.

"Tell me, then, Messer Mocenigo," said Don John evenly to the keener and older of the two captains, "in what condition is this great armament as to men?"

"Highness, it is not too-well manned. There is much sickness. Losses from disease, I was told, have been heavy. Haley has 4500 Janissaries in prime condition. They have been taken care of and are groomed for the fight, though his commanders are not all agreed on the wisdom of engaging Your Highness at present.

Yet all are confident and most contemptuous of any Christian force, as Your Highness perhaps knows."

"I do know," assented Don John drily. "Tell me further: Who commands the land forces with Ali?"

"Pertau Bashaw, Highness."

"A sufficiently tough bird, that soldier of fortune! But we may manage to pluck a few of his tail feathers."

"Your Highness," exclaimed Mocinego, reaching suddenly into his wallet, "I have here a copy of the bombastic address lately distributed by Pertau Bashaw among his men-at-arms. It is rude, but I thought Your Highness——"

Don John took the paper and scanned it: it was written in Arabic characters. "Can you read it, Mocenigo?" he asked.

"Indifferently——"

"Then put it into your Venetian for me."

Mocenigo read:

The Seraskier Pertau Pasha to His Men.

"We are to fight, Fellows in Arms, with that kind of Men whom our Ancestors have driven out of Euboea, the Rhodes, Mitylene, Peloponnesus, the Tripolis, and we ourselves but yesterday out of the famous Island of Cyprus; whose Cities and strong Towns, in number infinite, our Sultan hath, as the reward of his Wars; whom we have always vanquished as well by Sea as by Land; and shall it then now repent you, that you in this War, embrued in the Christian Blood, have sunk or taken many of their Ships and Gallies? That you have carried away great and rich Spoils? That you have taken whole Islands and Cities at the first assault? That we have by proof shewed unto the World what force is in the Turk to subdue strong Cities and

Towns? And what little power is in the Christians to defend the same? What direction brought us victory before, the same shall also at this present give us the like. Not to speak of that, that we far excel them both in number of Men and Gallies, this is more to be reckoned of, that we excel them in Valour and Prowess; for you, being old expert Souldiers, from your infancy trained up in the Wars, hardened in infinite Battels, and full of courage and strength, shall fight against weak, fresh-water and effeminate Souldiers; who engaged for pay (of the refuse of all Nations) know nothing belonging to the Wars; or forcibly pressed out of Cities, serve, not because they would, but because they must neither will nor choose. But not to speak more of the manner of the *Christian souldiers, who are nothing else than the perpetual exercise of your renown and prowess;* and to come unto him, under whose fortune and conduct they serve. What should I say? Should I compare either of us (who have spent our Lives in Victories and Triumphs; who bore and were brought up amongst Arms, have with our right hands gained unto ourselves Honour and Fame) with this stripling and half-month's Captain, who never saw Battels but these? Who in a less matter never shewed proof of himself, who should he be accounted of in a greater? Who in so weighty a cause needed a Tutor; and such a one, as indeed beareth the Name of a General, more for his honour than for any worth in himself. Besides, amongst the Enemies is such a dissension, that every Man regardeth his own private service as pleaseth himself, contemneth and is contemned: Whereas with us is such consent, that it cannot be devised, how the Souldiers in general should more trust their Commanders, or the Commanders their Souldiers. What things were by the discipline of War or

carefulness of a General to be prepared, all those you have abundantly and plentifully in readiness—only this last warlike labour remaineth; which once despatched, our Enemies shall be discomfited even in that wherein their greatest confidence resteth. They shall be dispoiled of their Honour and Traffick at Sea; and that once subdued, which is alone the glory of the Sea, there shall be no hope left for the Christians, whether by Sea or Land; *and* (*that we have always wished*) *Italy, Fair Italy* (wherein these matters are plotted against us) *shall be in our hand and power;* wherefore let us with such courage assail our Enemies, as beseemeth most victorious Conquerors, Men so many times conquered; and so set forward, as if you saw our Sultan himself encouraging you, and giving you the signal of Battel; of his bounty, and the present victory, expecting all felicity and bliss."

CHAPTER L

THE FALL OF FAMAGOSTA

Don John smiled again drily as the Venetian finished reading. "'Stripling!'" he exclaimed lightly. "I cannot deny it. 'Half-month's captain!'—almost true. 'Who never saw battels but these—and needed a tutor!' Well, well! In Requesens I have, at least, a good one. On the whole, the modest Pasha estimates me more truly than the Holy League does—only the event will prove which is right. But—of greater importance—read again what Messer Pertau says of Cyprus." Mocenigo re-read: "We ourselves but yesterday have driven out of the famous island of Cyprus——"

"But, Messer Mocenigo," protested Don John interrupting, "surely *that* cannot be true. Famagosta has not fallen?"

"Only the city of Famagosta remains to us, Your Highness. And now after three months' seige it is most hard-pressed."

"But while Famagosta, defended by the brave Bragadino, stands, Cyprus stands."

"Then pray God Bragadino may hold out," exclaimed Mocenigo fervently.

The Venetians had scarce gone when Pedro was admitted. He was in a state of great excitement. "Master," he began, forgetting all other manners, "strange stories have reached my ears. The Spanish soldiers whom you lent to man the Venetian galleys——"

"What of them?" demanded Don John sternly.

"Captain Tortona of the Spanish service, on duty aboard a galley of Venice, quarrelled with the galley crew. General Veniero sent his flag captain to arrest him. Tortona and his men resisted. In the fight, the flag captain was wounded, but Tortona and his men were overpowered by numbers——"

"What then?" demanded the Commander, incensed.

Pedro had hesitated. "Tortona, badly wounded, his sergeant and a soldier were dragged aboard the Venetian flagship and by order of Veniero, hanged at the yard-arm."

"Damnation!" exclaimed Don John, springing to his feet in a transport of fury. "Is it thus Venice treats my men on the eve of battle? Summon Requesens and Farnese. If this be true, Veniero shall be placed under arrest."

The worst of the rumor proved true. Tortona, a brave but hot-headed Italian in the Spanish service, and his men, had been summarily hanged by the Venetian General.

While Don John was in conference with his chief officers over the sudden crisis, a Venetian deputation craved audience. It was headed by Barbarigo, first of the Republic's sea fighters.

They found a severe manner in their reception by the Spaniards. Barbarigo, conscious of the critical situation, gave his account of the tragedy in as conciliatory a manner as possible; but the facts were as Pedro had reported.

"And my captain and two men are *hanged?*" thundered Don John.

Barbarigo bowed. "And Veniero," continued the enraged Commander, "reports to me an offense of my men after he has hanged them! Wherefore? Does he

look to me to bury them? By what authority does Veniero pass judgment on my officers? Look you! Your general shall hear more of this. Because I lend him men to man his galleys shall he have authority to put them to death? I tell you, Barbarigo, I'll not have it!" And having spoken in wrath, he turned his back on the deputation.

Don John summoned his officers to his cabin behind closed doors, and laid the facts before them. A low chorus of angry comment followed his disclosure. Once the news passed through the fleet, many of his Spanish captains were infuriated; they talked openly of firing into their Venetian allies. Setting his foot down sternly on this outburst of folly, Don John, after further counsel with his most trusted advisers, was still angry enough to place the fiery old war-horse under arrest had not a night's sleep over so momentous a step allowed his better judgment to assert itself. He compromised with the hot-heads about him by issuing an order effective at once and to stand until rescinded, excluding Veniero from further war councils.

The sun had not set upon his wrath before he had occasion to give thanks for his restraint. On the 3rd of October, at dawn, Don John was again under weigh and presently abreast the town of Prevesa—the mere sight of it arousing bitter memories of the success there of the beastly Turk, owing wholly to disgraceful dissensions within a previous Christian League. On the morning of the 4th, he anchored off Cape Blanco, the northern headland of Cephalonia; and while there a bark passing from the eastward brought him positive news that the Turkish fleet under Ali Pasha was at Lepanto and the less welcome news that Aluch Ali and his squadron had joined him.

Don John on the quarter-deck with Sandro and Re-

quesens, shrugged his shoulders as the bare-headed captain of the bark finished his story. "Enough is enough, but too much is too much," he observed. "Ali, singly, would be fine; Aluch, singly, would be fine. What is your line, Sandro, about being very happy with one love and most unhappy with two? Never mind! It will only make a fuller meal," he added, as the spirits of all three rose at the nearness of the enemy, and Don John ordered the voyager dismissed with a gratuity. "Sandro," he continued, "issue me an order—just one, but we will make it emphatic. Forbid the discharge of a firearm anywhere in this fleet under pain of instant death. And you, two," he said, addressing his companions, "won't have long now to wait for combat and spoil."

"I want a couple of good black men out of it but they must be jet black—true Nubians," struck in Sandro. "Upstanding fellows, the kind with glistening skins—you know."

"Modest enough. What about you, Commander?"

"I? Nothing! But," added Requesens, "my wife wants enough Turkish carpets to furnish the new house we are building at Madrid—it's fairly good-sized—and a couple or eight strings of pearls."

"I promise them to her now. Summon Figueroa. Tell him to take a frigate, as we also will do, and run through the fleet: we must sail to-night."

"Foul weather, I'm afraid," observed Requesens, looking up at the sky and the telltale.

"No matter. We will run as far as we can."

Scarcely had the fleet anchors been lowered under the shelter of the harbor of Viscardo when one of the vessels, beating to southward, overhauled a brigantine from Candia bearing fateful tidings.

Don John, pacing his quarter-deck with Requesens,

saw the galliot and brigantine coming into the harbor together. Half an hour later he was called from his cabin and found the captain of the brigantine with a man beside him whose head was covered with a black cloth, awaiting an audience.

"Your Highness," the captain began, indicating the man at his side, "may see in this unfortunate Franciscan friar, a victim of the cruelty of the Turk. I am from Candia, Your Highness. This wretched man made his escape, with a Greek fisherman, from Famagosta——"

"Famagosta?" echoed the Commander-in-Chief, keenly alert. "And what of Famagosta? What news of Famagosta?"

The captain fingered his cap as he bowed his head. "Famagosta, Your Highness—it has fallen."

Don John frowned. "Bad news. Is it verified?"

"He himself is his own verification, Your Highness," said the captain in low tones. Indeed, the rags of sail cloth and bagging that covered the refugee's nakedness seemed to confirm evil report. His hands were incased in small bags, soiled and spotted, made of refuse linen. "I have brought him to you that he might tell his own story. He is partly deaf, Your Highness, and sees poorly."

"Why does he not uncover?" demanded Don John, impatiently. "Uncover, Friar!"

"It is the flies, Excellency. They torment him sorely. You shall see," he added, lifting the cloth from the man's head.

The Commander saw a tall, erect man of powerful build, not yet past middle age, but so mutilated in feature that only his mother could have known her own child. Where his black hair had been torn in places from his head, the wounds still festered. Where his

ears had been, only mangled fragments of flesh remained. The tip of his nose had been cut away. His lips had been slashed transversely from the base of his exposed nostrils to the point of his chin. His swollen eyelids, through which he blinked painfully, had been seared till the eyes themselves were visible only through narrow slits.

"Mother of Mercy!" cried Don John, who, seasoned to horrors of warfare, gasped involuntarily at the sight. "And he lives! What is his story? Speak, Friar! A chair, Pedro, quick!"

The Candiote captain, a merciful man, seated the unhappy priest, and spoke loudly in his ear. Thus advised, the friar began. But the horrible mutilation of his mouth made his words not only painful to utter but equally painful to listen to. When Don John could not understand, the captain interpreted.

Narrative of Padre Francis

"Your Highness must know that Famagosta was surrendered to the Turk on August first——"

"August first! Great God! Woe to Cyprus," muttered his august listener.

"We had seven thousand men to defend it; they were stout-hearted men under a stout-hearted commander, Baglione, and Bragadino, captain of our town!" gasped the feeble priest, lifting both his linen-covered hands and his seared eyes toward heaven at the mention of the names. For an instant, he could not speak, then he mastered his emotion and went on. "The enemy was like the sands of the desert: they numbered a hundred thousand men and the green tents of Mustafa's Janissaries covered the plain and the shore of Costanza. Great trenches were dug in which horsemen could ride with spears, unseen, about

the beleaguered city. Week upon week the Turks plotted and struggled to compass our downfall. No help came to us from the Western seas. Day after day, with heavy hearts, we scanned the horizon only to discover it filled with Turkish ships. Sickness, starvation, death in defense was our lot. Half our garrison had fallen. Despairing at last, the people of the city begged our officers to surrender on terms, rather than to undergo the horrors of a sack if we resisted longer. And Mustafa the Turk promised conditions—safety to all—life, liberty and property. Woe to Cyprus—we surrendered!

"Our noble captains, Astor Baglione and Marc Antonio Bragadino were summoned to the tent of Mustafa Pasha. They went, attended by their principal officers and a guard of forty soldiers. Meeting them in friendliest fashion, Mustafa conversed with them at length, like the dastard Turk he soon proved.

"Then falling into a feigned rage, Mustafa, despite his solemn engagements, broke out into vile language, made false accusations against our noble commanders, and ordered them seized and dragged from his tent. Baglione with his officers and his forty men were cut to pieces then and there before the eyes of Mustafa——"

"And Bragadino?" cried Don John, horror-stricken.

"Alas for Bragadino! Would that he might have perished with his companions. With only his nose and ears cut off, Bragadino was held till the following Moslem Sunday—" the voice of the unfortunate Padre broke. "On that day," he continued presently, "our noble Bragadino, peer of princes, was led around the Turk's batteries, crawling on his hands and knees, laden with two baskets of earth. Whenever he passed

the quarters of Mustafa, he was forced to kiss the ground. He was hoisted to the yard of Mustafa's galley in a chain that all the infidel army might see him. He was then exposed in the market place of Famagosta, bound to a pillory. Then, woe is me, his skin was cut from his body with sharp knives, inch by inch, as if our noble captain were a bullock—with Mustafa standing on the marble wall of the palace to enjoy the barbarity——"

Again the mutilated victim paused, overcome by the recollection of another's sufferings. "Noble Marc Antonio!" he exclaimed. Tears furrowed his sunken cheeks when he resumed. "He lived until they had stripped his skin to the waist. But throughout his torture, he did not wince or falter. He died, Your Highness, chanting with his bleeding lips the words of the Psalm:

The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want."

A hush followed the broken recital. Don John was first in the group to collect himself. "Woe, indeed, is Cyprus. And its blood cries to heaven and to us for vengeance. Tell us, Padre, what happened to you, yourself?"

"Before the surrender, a Greek peasant brought word to our house that a Christian fisherman was dying on the shore outside the city, and had begged to see a priest. I was appointed to minister to him——"

"But only after this Padre had begged to go—" whispered the captain of the brigantine.

"By night, accompanied by my guide, I left the city. My guide proved a traitor. He had been hired by the enemy to lure a padre from the city that he might learn the secrets of the defense. I was delivered into the hands of Mustafa—that is all."

"Not *quite,"* interposed the captain grimly. "When

they found his lips were sealed they said they would open them in the form of a cross with a knife—" the captain pointed to the shocking mutilation, "so that he might speak the truth. Torture succeeded torture; but with all their tortures, they could not break his constancy. Starved, festering, dying, the prey of flies and worms, he was cast out of prison with the dead, on the beach, to be buried with them at daybreak, in the sands. But he crawled away from the bodies of the dead and when day was breaking, a Christian fisherman found him. This man's wife nursed him back to life and I found his fisherman and himself out at sea. I took him aboard and his rescuer put back. I was bringing him to Venice when Your Highness' galliot overhauled us. Be pleased to look at his hands."

The captain loosened the drawstrings of the soiled and spotted bags. The prisoner's fingers had been chewed by the Turks as they endeavored to wring from him the secrets of the besieged city; they had been pounded with Turkish hammers to a bloody pulp and mangled with Turkish chopping-knives. The captain held them up—raw and festering—before the horrified onlookers.

Don John ordered all to kneel, and, following their example, he spoke. "Padre," he said reverently to the heroic Italian, "bless us with your crippled hands; ask for us in battle, whether in victory or defeat, the spirit that sustained you under a more terrible ordeal than we can possibly be called on to undergo."

The stricken man rose to his feet. He raised the ghastly claws that had once been human hands—young, shapely, skilled and strong hands—and with his seared eyes lifted above those who knelt, he mumbled through his misshapen lips the words of his blessing, and signed over them the symbol of the Cross.

Rising, Don John turned to Pedro. "Take him to my surgeon."

"When all has been done for him that can be done" —he addressed Farnese—"it is my order, Sandro, that he be taken in my own frigate, draped in black, throughout the fleet, that our men, one and all, may behold what it means to fall into the hands of the blasphemous Turks. May they be cursed in their down-sittings and up-risings forevermore! And may we in God's Will yet deal them in these waters such a blow as will drive the infidel horde back to the hell in which their fathers were spawned!"

CHAPTER LI

TO YOUR SHIPS!

STERN faces greeted the appearance of the black frigate as the tragedy of Famagosta was bruited about the great company of ships and its rescued victim attended by brother Franciscans passed among them, giving blessings to the Christian host. Lowering brows and muttered imprecations everywhere greeted the tragic details of the fate of Famagosta and its defenders.

Barbarigo himself brought from Veniero a message thanking the Commander-in-Chief for his care of the cruelly maltreated Venetian padre. "If anything more were needed," he sent word, "to unite us in one spirit against an unspeakable enemy, it has been supplied in this example of his barbarity."

Spurred to activity by the tragic news from Cyprus, and by rumors that a second Turkish fleet was on its way from the Levant to unite with Ali, those leaders who had counselled caution and delay, now saw with Don John that not an hour was to be lost in closing with the enemy. With the weather still unfavorable, the fleet sailed from Viscardo on October 6th down the Channel of Cephalonia to the Vale of Alessandria.

Information concerning enemy movement being the first anxiety of a commander, both Don John and Ali Pasha spared no effort to enlighten themselves; though in this respect the theatre of their operations favored

the Turk. One of the Pasha's spies, Karakosh, a daring Barbary corsair, disguised as a fisherman, had actually been present in a fishing boat during the review of the Christian fleet at Gomeniza on October 2. Not satisfied with this, he set out a few days later and entering the Cephalonian Canal discovered the Christian fleet held back at Philaros by bad weather.

But the adventurous pirate, at the moment he discovered the Christians, was discovered by them; and in the haste of a narrow escape from vengeance he failed to note a portion of the fleet hidden by a small arm of the bay. Thus he returned to Lepanto confident that the enemy fleet was no larger than he had seen it at Corfu.

Misleading reports from wily Greek fishermen had reached Don John and were not rectified until the fateful morning of the battle. The two Venetian captains had given him a good account of the Turkish fleet. As late as September 28th at Corfu, he had been informed that the Turkish force was about three hundred sail. But a later report had reduced this fleet to two hundred sail, on account of losses and the ravages of disease among the men. Aluch Ali was reported to have sailed with the important Algerine squadron for Coron, though in matter of fact he was absent, making observations, and soon rejoined Ali Pasha, who lay with his whole fleet behind the forts of the Turkish naval base at Lepanto. Each commander was thus deceived as to the strength of his enemy.

At Lepanto, Ali Pasha had the best harbor on the north coast of the entire Gulf. Here, since the days of Greek legend and throughout Greek history had been a port in which fleets made ready and sailed forth to conquest. From this base, the Pasha, stimulated by the report of Karakosh, now sailed at the head of

the most formidable Turkish fleet ever assembled to challenge the forces of Christendom.

Believing that Don John still lay in the Canal of Cephalonia, Ali headed thitherward to find him and bottle him up; and on the night of the 6th of October he anchored in the Bay of Calydon just inside the Gulf and not far distant from Cape Scropha—close to where the actual battle was to take place.

But Don John had no idea of leaving his fleet where it had once been inspected by a Turkish spy. Moreover, he was as anxious to meet the Pasha as the Pasha could be to meet him. It thus happened that on the night of the 6th, both commanders, thirsting equally for contact and combat, lay with their full forces but a few miles, in a naval sense, apart. Hidden from the Pasha by the same rocky headland beyond which the Turkish fleet concealed itself, Don John that night lay some miles north of Scropha in the Port of Petala. A fateful headland, Scropha: to bear, next day, the fell appellation given it by the Turks, "The Bloody Cape."

Stealing with muffled oars, in the early morning of the 7th, from his hiding place—it was two o'clock when he got under weigh—Don John steered southward. There was no moon—in the first quarter, it had followed the sun into the west in the afterglow of the evening—and the great company of ships moved down the narrow passage guided in the darkness by the light of the stars. The utmost caution was enjoined and the strictest silence prevailed. The accidental discharge of a firearm meant not alone death to the offender but by the orders of Don John, death likewise to the commander of the vessel on which it occurred.

Threading its way thus wise between the Isle of

Oxia and the mainland opening from the Gulf, the Christians at break of day stood about three miles from the southern group of the rocks and shoals known as the Curzolarian Isles, on the north side of the Lepanto Gulf, called the Gulf of Patras, and about forty miles west of the castles that guard the entrance to the Gulf of Lepanto proper.

The 7th of October fell on Sunday, and Don John had early given orders for the celebration of mass throughout the fleet, coupled with fervent prayers ascending with the rays of the rising sun, that God would give to his Cross the palm of victory.

As the sun broke above the eastern horizon, the Commander-in-Chief ordered two frigates to stand toward the highest of the nearby rocks and put ashore scouts to discover signs of the enemy. In the swifter of the two he despatched what he called "the best eyes in the fleet," his own flagship pilot, the Venetian, Cecco Pisano.

"Cecco," admonished Don John, laying his hand on the veteran's shoulder, and speaking gravely as he looked hard at him, "use well at this moment the eyes that God has given you. Go to the highest point to discover traces of our enemy and report back to no one but me. Haste!"

Juan de Cardona, vanguard captain, was despatched at the same time to thread the rocky isles with his light galleys and search for any Turkish vessels that might be lurking among them.

To the southward, Doria was swinging into position with his galleys, and close behind the flagship of Don John, the Royal, the Genoese squadron followed.

Pisano meantime strove to reach the summit of a rocky isle that overlooked the Gulf: and his vantage

point attained, a startling scene unfolded itself to the eye of the seasoned mariner.

On the ample bosom of the broad Gulf, Pisano beheld in the now brilliant sunshine the waters covered with sail. On the distant horizon, as far as the eye could reach—from shore to shore—the silent spectre of the enemy appeared before him. As a flock of gulls rise white out of a blue sea, so to Cecco's eyes rose the ordered galleys of the Turkish fleet from the waters of Lepanto. Not in dozens not in scores, but in hundreds, moved by a gentle breeze, the great Turkish fleet came on.

The heart of the brave pilot sank. Clambering hastily down the rocks, he regained the frigate and ordered all speed to the Royal. Don John awaited him on the poop. He read in the pilot's blanched face, the portent of his news. "Bare your talons, Highness," exclaimed the gray-haired Italian unsteadily. "They are upon us! And they have the wind!"

"How many?"

"In all my years, Highness, I have never seen so many at once. Count on more than three hundred."

Don John listened to the ominous news, studying unmoved the features of Pisano as the old man answered his keen questions. The poised fortitude that had characterized Don John from childhood did not desert him. He was facing the supreme crisis of his life. He realized that the enemy was not only superior in force, but unlike his own command, united in purpose. Yet he refused to communicate to a soul the unwelcome intelligence. Smiling at the emotion of his agitated officer he again laid his hand on his shoulder. "So be it, Cecco! God will decide the day. Tell no one what you have seen; others will know soon enough. Now, have a care, my friend. We can afford no mis-

take. For ourselves, we must bear well to the south—well! Give Barbarigo with the left wing abundance of room to clear these rocks. To your post!"

As he spoke the words, the watch cried from the maintop. He reported two strange sails to the southeast.

More keen eyes were sent aloft. Another and another sail was announced, eight more soon counted; and within a few minutes the Turkish fleet, as Cecco had pictured it, was rising above the horizon.

Without losing a second, Don John ordered his foresail hauled to the wind, a square green ensign run up to the peak, and a gun to be fired. The thunders of alarm from the throat of the signal gun rolled from ship to ship of the hitherto silent fleet, crashed against the rocks of the ancient Echinades and slowly reverberating, lost themselves in the distant gorges of the Acarnians. It was the signal to prepare for battle, and with every eye bent on the flagship, a hoarse, far-reaching cheer slowly rising and gathering in strength and volume, echoed and re-echoed from rock to rock and ship to ship.

From the flagship, two frigates were despatched—to the right and left—to order the six Venetian galeasses to take up their appointed positions a mile in front of the battle line. These formidable vessels, the largest of the age and mounting twenty cannons each, were the last word in naval gunnery and design, were meant to break up an advancing line.

Every captain made haste to prepare for action, and every man sprang to quarters. To provide added deck room for the soldiers, the rowers' benches in many vessels had been removed or planked over.

On the Royal, Don John had ordered the decks cleared until they looked like a parade square. To Lope

de Figueroa and Miguel de Monçada was assigned the command of the prow. Bernardino de Cardenas was charged with the defense of the quarter-deck. Don John had provided ample space to fight and over the deck had distributed his veteran Sardegnians. Bulwarks had been strengthened and nettings raised against boarders. Fetters were struck from the Christian slaves throughout the fleet. Convict and criminal alike were supplied with arms. With the promise of freedom if victory followed, the sunken men embraced their liberators and with tears in their eyes swore to die for Don John of Austria and their Faith—and before the sun had sunk on the bloody scene many had made good their oath. The chains and rivets of the Moslem slaves at the oar were carefully examined and the men were handcuffed as an additional precaution, in order that they might not use their arms in any way but to ply the oar.

The chiefs of the fleet hurriedly repaired to the flagship to learn the final resolution and receive the final instructions from Don John—some of them to combat that resolution and object to those instructions.

Veniero was anxious and low-spirited. Doria and the Italian, La Corgnia—head of the Italian land forces—reminded the young commander that the Turk, evidently bent now on fighting, had, just behind him, the harbor, arsenal and defenses of Lepanto; while for the League, far from any friendly port, disaster meant destruction. Some of his councillors advised their youthful commander to retire even at this late moment while it was still in his power to do so.

Don John stood in his council cabin, surrounded by the ablest naval commanders of Europe, all of them seasoned in major naval conflict. The gray-haired but

stout-hearted and iron-willed Veniero was not there, but his unusual depression that morning had weighed on Barbarigo, who spoke for Venice. The Genoese, Gianandrea Doria, was there, bold and skillful as a seaman, but yellow with jealousy, and resolved that this diapered fledgling prince should do himself no honor at his expense. The courtly Roman, Colonna, strong-willed and loyal, was likewise there, silently awaiting the momentous decision of the Commander.

Don John, colorless and outwardly emotionless, rose. He knew only too well that he was speaking to confederates bristling with contention among themselves and raw with jealousy; yet nothing of this influenced his words. "Gentlemen," he said evenly, "the time for counsel is past. The time for fighting has come. To your ships!"

With the League galleys manœuvering into position, Don John, attended by Don Juan de Soto, his secretary, and by Don Luis de Cordoba, took a frigate of exceptional speed armed with a single German gun, summoned Pedro and ran along the line to the right of the flagship.

As yet unarmed, the Commander carried only in his hand the half-burnt crucifix of Don Luis and nearing each galley in turn he addressed its officers and men.

"Nobles and men of St. Mark," he said to the Venetians, "the hour has come when your ancient and insolent enemy is to be delivered into your hands. When his arrows rain their hail on you, when his guns belch their lead, when he screams and yells and dances to affright you—remember your fair city, remember your wives, your mothers, your sisters and daughters, and swear they shall never be given over to the lusts of the Turk. Remember you have but to strike—to strike

and to slay—to bring to naught his yelling and boasting.

"Keep cool heads. Obey orders. *Never* give up! And God will see that the victory to-day shall be yours. Remember Cyprus; remember Famagosta; remember Baglione cut to pieces by your treacherous and infamous enemy; remember Bragadino, flayed alive at the stake and dying with a prayer on his bleeding lips. Men of St. Mark! Will you stand with me to-day?"

Roar after roar of assent as he sped along, pledged the loyalty of his listeners.

To the Spaniards he said: "My children, to-day we conquer or we die. If you do your part, we must conquer! *That,* heaven has promised to us. Do not let the infidel to-day taunt us by asking: 'Where is your God?'

"Fight in His Holy Name! And in death or in victory, immortality shall be ours!"

Galley after galley joined in frenzied shouts of devotion and echoed the spirit he inspired. It seemed as if he had placed in each of his men his own indomitable soul. Not all of his words were in rounded periods, not all his expressions balanced. He told them that they were fighting for Christianity—for their faith and for all that men hold dearest in life. "In heaven," he thundered, "there is no room for cowards."

But he spoke all with appeal so earnest and sincere that his words burned the hearts of those who listened. As he passed along the line, enthusiasm became madness. A half-delirious captain cried out to him: "A souvenir! A souvenir, most noble Commander!"

Without hesitation, Don John tore from his neck a golden chain and tossed it to him.

The gesture caught like wildfire. Thunders of applause followed and as he sped along he was beset;

every captain became a beggar. Enjoying it no less than his suppliants, the Prince emptied himself. He tossed to them coins, medals, scapulars, rosaries—everything in his pockets and everything he could borrow from his laughing aides. With his resources exhausted, he flung to a Venetian captain his hat, and to a cheering Knight of Malta one of his gloves. Close to the extreme end of the centre or "battle" right, lay two Sicilian galleys—the larger named "The Black Galley," and both known throughout the fleet because commanded by two roistering, devil-may-care brothers of high repute for daring—Benito and Giuseppi. Benito's galley lay first; to Benito, Don John threw his second glove.

The dark-skinned brother, Giuseppi, stood on the deck of the Black Galley waiting, black-browed. Don John in desperation held up his empty hands. Giuseppi grasped the situation and snatching a purse from his girdle held it out toward his more fortunate brother in the neighbor galley. "Benito!" he cried. "A hundred ducats for that glove. Come!"

"Not for a thousand, Giuseppi. It shall be my plume this day. See! I fasten it to my hat!"

Don John, though not easily moved, ordered the frigate halted and brought alongside the long-faced Giuseppi. The youthful Commander stripped from the third finger of his right hand a ring set with a treasured diamond. "You shall not be bereft, Giuseppi," he called to the swarthy captain as he held out the token. "Take this ring. Only, remember! Before you surrender your ship, cast this ring into the sea; for it bears the motto of Don John of Austria, 'Macula Carens,' *'Without Blemish.'*"

The black eyes of the Sicilian softened as he bent low to kiss the precious gift. "When this ring goes

into the sea, Most Noble General, I wed these waters with my dying body!"

Back down the line, toward his flagship, followed by wild cheers, sped the gallant Commander. But he had planted in the breasts of his men his own great soul. Shipmates who had not spoken for weeks, made up their quarrels, embraced one another and swore to conquer that day, to offer up their lives in the sacred Cause of Christ.

While the six cumbrous galeasses were being towed and tugged in pairs into position—two well ahead of each of the three divisions of the Christian line—Don John visited the two in front of his centre. He electrified their crews with his dynamic spirit; and returning to his ship, he did not forget to pass close under the stern of the flagship of Venice, where he addressed with great good sense and feeling, some courteous words to the gallant and hot-tempered Veniero, who likewise moved, responded warmly to the unexpected greeting.

While Don John was thus fortifying the right wing and Colonna was inspecting his stout Roman galleys, the hardy Requesens in a swift-sailing bark had sped on a similar mission along the left wing. He carried one order of vital import from Don John. "Tell Barbarigo," the Commander had said with special emphasis, "to hug the rocks! You see their spread," he added, pointing across the blue waters of the Gulf to mile after mile of the white-sailed oncoming crescent. "Our right will be on the open sea—we can't help that. But if our left doesn't rest against the rocks they'll double us up like a pocket-knife. Haste, Requesens!"

Returning to the quarter-deck of the Royal, stripped of his belongings, Don John, that he might not for an

instant lose sight of the enemy's battle line, called for his armor and on the quarter-deck, under the little canopy of red-and-white striped Damascus cloth, was vested where he stood.

His harness was emblazoned in sombre black relieved by brilliant studdings of silver so cunningly imposed by the master hand of his Spanish armorer as to be almost impregnable to an arrow and to deflect all but the stoutest shock of a ball. His heavy sword was girded at his left side and his dagger at his right. Before he took from Pedro his plumed burgonet, he hung about his neck, outside his cuirass, the massive gold chain from which depended the Toison d'Oro—the Emblem of the Golden Fleece—which every Knight of the Order was pledged to wear on going into battle.

Within the bosom of his corselet he placed but two objects: a Lignum Crucis bestowed upon him by the Gray Man of Christ; and a ruby ring given him by one, waiting now, he well knew, for her father to come home and her lover to come back.

By Don John's orders the precious crucifix of Don Luis was carried aloft by Pedro and placed securely within a box-frame already prepared for it high on the foremast. "There, gentlemen," said the Commander, simply, "is the Christ of my battles. May He prove our defender this day!"

Hardly had he turned from the crucifix, when, with his eye sweeping the Christian battle line, he perceived that Doria was leading the right wing too far out to sea, thus leaving between his extreme left and the centre division of Don John, a dangerous gap. He noted that Aluch followed the same disposition along parallel lines within the left wing of the Turkish fleet; and he saw at once the effort of the renegado to detach the right wing of the Christian Armada from the

main body; he was already succeeding in his crafty design to isolate and surround the whole wing.

Don John, in stern anger, instantly despatched a frigate to warn his Genoese Admiral of his danger and the risk he ran of compromising the whole engagement. But the frigate failed to cover in time the three miles that already separated Doria from his Commander-in-Chief.

A fresh east wind, as the two fleets advanced, each in full view of the other, and a sea running fairly high, favored the Turk. In those days of sea-fighting, the direction and velocity of the wind was not only a factor of much moment but not infrequently a decisive factor. Later in the morning, the breeze shifting to the west, the waves fell and left the Gulf like glass, greatly favoring the Christians, who ascribed the advantage to heaven's response to the prayers with which it so long had been, and was still being, stormed. And the wind having shifted, a favoring breeze filled the League sails, as the hostile fleets stood forward.

The Turks were now lashing their unhappy galley slaves to ply their oars furiously; and across the broad Gulf, stretching more than three miles toward the shallows of the north and the lowlands of the south, the vast crescent line of the Ottomans pushed rapidly on. While presenting hardly more than half of the imposing breadth of the enemy, the carefully ordered Christian fleet moved into the Gulf to challenge it.

Ali Pasha, sailing like Don John in the centre of his line, stood under the canopy of his quarter-deck garbed in Oriental magnificence. Of a commanding figure and a martial bearing, he symbolized in himself the pride, the luxury and the insolent power of the mighty Empire whose destinies were, for the hour, reposed in his

hand. His caftan of white brocade was woven of silk and silver; at his side, in a lavishly enriched scabbard, hung his Damascus scimitar. His visorless helmet of steel showed below his turban, embossed with gold and studded with turquoises, rubies and diamonds. They glittered vividly in the sunlight as his flagship, the Sultana, bore him swiftly forward.

The ship itself was hardly less regal than its dreaded commander. The deck was of polished walnut, the cabin hung with richest tapestries and paneled with rarest woods. The Sultana stood very high in the stern and above the poop hung five massive gilded lanterns, symbols of the chief command. Its deck and forecastle bristled with artillery. Five hundred of the flower of his dare-devil Janissaries, three hundred armed with the arquebus, two hundred with the bow, filled his deck, and devoted to their chief, waited to defend master and ship with their lives and to carry destruction to his enemies.

Surrounding him and assigned solely to the defense of the flagship, were seven galleys, acting as screens and equipped to feed fresh forces to the flagship as they were needed to replace the slain. Of these, the strongest and best equipped carried the Seraskier Pertau Pasha, Commander-in-Chief of the land forces of the Empire; and supporting the battle line came the thirty galleys of the Turkish reserve.

To oppose this ingenious and formidable arrangement, Don John counted on the Royal only four hundred Sardegnian arquebusiers; but the fire of his forecastle guns, owing to his previously lowered galley-peaks, could be poured into an enemy ship, point-blank; and his foresight in protecting his own ship as well as the fleet ships with nettings to repel boarders, was soon

to repay his watchful care. He was flanked on the right and left by the flagships of Marcantonio Colonna and Sebastian Veniero. Requesens, wary and alert, lay astern with two galleys from which he could feed fresh troops into the Royal as need arose.

CHAPTER LII

THE ACTION OFF LEPANTO

THE hush of the intense moment neither hastened nor lessened the onrush of the Ottoman Armada. Ali counted in his centre division, ninety-five galleys, against ninety-two of Don John's centre. His right, led by Mahomet Scirocco, Pasha of Alexandria and King of Negropont, numbered fifty-six galleys; and his left, ninety-three galleys under the Scald-head, Aluch Ali.

As both leaders had been deceived concerning the strength of the other, so both had been deceived as to each other's location. And as two enemies, thirsting for each other's blood lie close together, unaware, all night in ambush, and when day breaks meet suddenly face to face, so Cross and Crescent blundered upon each other that Sunday morning. Ali was bound for Cephalonia; Don John for Lepanto.

When the Christian armament first came into sight of the Turks, it was rounding the rocky headland of Scropha. A final council of war was being held on board the Sultana, flagship of Ali Pasha, while the Turkish fleet was advancing like the Christian fleet, in three divisions. In the Capitan Pasha's cabin were gathered Mahomet Scirocco, chief of the right wing, and Aluch, head of the left wing—seasoned by forty years of piracy in those waters. Ali Pasha himself held the centre. Hassan Pasha, son of the great

Barbarossa, was there, as a sub-chief, together with the Seraskier Pertau Pasha.

Hassan Pasha was aggressive. "This fleet of the Holy League," he declared contemptuously, "has been assembled to gratify the vanity of this young prince. Similar fleets have melted away at the mere sight of the Turkish flag. Let us fight!"

Scirocco supported this view energetically. "I only ask," he said, "to lay my galley within oars' length of this puppy prince."

Aluch, the Scald-head, seventy-eight years old, crafty and sinister, smiled in patience. "Have you ever," he asked quietly of Mahomet Scirocco, "met this 'puppy' Prince?"

Scirocco lost none of his boastfulness. "Had I ever met him," he retorted briefly, "he would not to-day be here."

Aluch still smiled. "Since you have not," he continued, "I may say that this 'puppy' has sharp teeth. At Algiers, I drove the big dogs—Orgas and Doria—without much trouble into the sea. But this impudent puppy—he was only second in command of a Barcelona galley—snapped at my heel. And I was glad," he added grimly, "to limp home with what he left me of it. Let us, noble Pasha," he suggested to Ali, baring his huge teeth in a grin, "make at once a retrograde movement. It will throw the Christian dogs into disorder; then we will turn, and smite with fury!"

Ali Pasha decided otherwise. "Such a movement does not comport either with the honor, the dignity, or the orders of our Lord Selim. The galleys of the Padisha must never offer even the appearance of flight." And the council was dismissed.

Juan de Cardona's Sicilian galleys and a part of Doria's right wing were seen by the Turkish scouts

first. And the Turks rejoiced. But as the long lines of the centre under Don John and the left under Barbarigo deployed across the western horizon, the Ottomans looked more grave. Their spies had not only deceived their leaders but deceived themselves. Ali perceiving that the Christians had formed in a long, straight battle line, drew in the horns and advanced the centre of his crescent to meet them. The Christians remarked to their satisfaction that the enemy seemed covered by no reserve, though in some degree he was. Ali, in his flagship, was puzzled by the galeassess standing out, two and two, like frowning sentinels before the Christian line.

"What are those great ships, those *mahonas?*" he asked of his officers.

"They are not *mahonas,* Your Highness. They are galeasses!"

"What?" he demanded angrily. "I was told their galeasses were separated from the fleet. What fables do the spies of this accursed Aluch bring me? And see!" he exclaimed, scanning the enemy line. "Many of these galleys are ponentinas—stronger and larger than the Venetian tubs. Surprise after surprise—and one worse than another! Karacosh, my best spy, fooled! Look! There are the white pennants of Santa Cruz! His galleys, Karacosh declared, were not to be here at all!

"Victory will not drop into our hands this day, gentlemen; we must fight for it!" he exclaimed warningly. "And it may take the last stroke and the last breath to wring it from this upstart princeling. The artillery, the artillery! There we are weak and he, I fear, is strong. To quarters!"

A kind-hearted as well as a brave man, the great Ali had always been noted for the humanity he exercised

toward the unhappy Christian slaves who rowed his galley. Like another great Moslem, Saladin, Ali Pasha enjoyed the respect of his foes as well as that of his men.

He walked forward to the benches of his rowers. "Friends," said he to them in Spanish, "I expect you to-day to do your duty by me, in return for what I have done for you. If I win the battle, I promise you your liberty; if the day is yours—Allah has given you your freedom!"

When the two fleets neared each other the Christians were still kneeling before their crucifixes; from their decks no sound could be heard, save the low chanting of the friars. The Turks advanced yelling and screaming like madmen. They danced, stamped, clanged their arms, blew trumpets and fired useless volleys of musketry. "Come on!" they yelled at the Christians. "Come to the slaughter! You *hens!* We will drink your blood!"

Ending their supplications to heaven, the Christians stood once more to their guns and in the midst of a vast and impressive silence, the bugles sounded the charge.

At the signal, every band struck up martial music. Such was the elation and spirit of the moment that a deafening roar of defiance, pledge of victory, went up from the Christian host; and such was the spirit and elation of the moment that before retiring from the gun platform to the quarter-deck, Don John himself, animated by youthful ardor, joined his officers in stepping a galliard to the piercing music of the fifes.

Beyond the glitter of arms, the Turkish fleet boasted an added splendor of color in the brilliant dress of the Janissaries, with their fanciful crests and waving

plumes, and from the gala flags and streamers flown from point and peak of every galley.

It still lacked fifteen minutes of noon when Don John, with the sign of the Cross, raised his hand in signal to Pedro, and the challenge of battle was fired. At the same moment, the blue standard of the League was unfurled from the maintop supporting in its centre the figure of the Crucified.

The Sultana answered with a shot, accepting the challenge, and the Pasha ordered the sacred standard of the Prophet raised. From the peak it broke out in the wind, a splendor of silken white, boxed with a deep green border. In the great centre, verses from the Koran were embroidered in letters of gold. Long preserved at Mecca, it represented the utmost of microscopic skill and infinite patience in Oriental art, the name of Allah being repeated on it more than 28,000 times.

Suddenly the east wind died. In that moment of calm, there could be heard only the lapping of the waves that caressed the prows of the galleys and the clanking chains of the rowing benches. Then it was that as if in benediction on the Christian Armada, the west wind began to blow more strongly against the Turks.

Long before the Christians had come within range, the Turkish artillery opened. In the midst of a moment of intense suspense, while the smoke of the Turkish cannon broke into the sunshine, a flash, and a spurt of flame burst from Francisco Duodo's Venetian galeasse, La Capitana. The shot was fired at the Sultana, conspicuous in the line. The ball, passing through the rigging, carried away a portion of the highest of the five splendid lanterns that hung on the lofty stern. The Pasha, hearing the crash, and perceiving the ominous mischief, looked grave. "That," said he ironically, "is

from one of the vessels not here—according to Aluch. Allah grant we may be able to give a good answer to this question!"

Duodo's next shot split off a great piece of the poop of an adjoining galley. The third sunk a despatch frigate, leaving the Sultana with orders. Four of the galeasses were soon pouring solid shot into the Turkish centre and right wing—the two galeasses facing the left wing became useless later when Aluch began his southerly movement to outflank Doria. As a sea fortress the galeasses were proving deadly; the great ships were supreme in naval gunnery, but like fortresses, they were not mobile. Their heavy balls were stopping Turkish vessels as if they had been struck by rocks; two of the Pasha's galleys were almost instantly sunk by their broadsides.

Stunned by the galling fire, galleys of the Turkish centre tried to retire and reform. The Pasha angrily countermanded the attempt. Seizing the tiller of the Sultana himself, and without losing an instant, he bore down on the center galeasses and sent his flagship through their salvos without exchanging a shot. Spurred by their commander's heroic example, the yelling fleet followed. The line was thrown into some confusion; but the Turkish fleet braved the deadly galeasses and leaving their disabled vessels behind, swept on toward the Christian line.

Mahomet Scirocco, leaving the Turkish right wing, tried both to elude the galeasses and to flank the Venetians by passing between them and the north shore. Barbarigo, warned by Don John, scented the danger and tried to meet it, but the pilots of Scirocco were more familiar than his own pilots with the shallow waters, and Barbarigo's guides dreaded the hidden rocks and shoals with which they abound. Scirocco

thus succeeded in running a few galleys around the Venetian end and put Barbarigo under a heavy cross-fire. So sudden and so bold was the movement that the brave son of St. Mark found his flagship La Capitana assailed by eight Turkish vessels at once.

Salvos of artillery and volleys of musketry were poured in on the devoted Barbarigo. As he stood on the quarter-deck shouting his orders, the hail of the archers fell so thick around him that the great lantern on the galley's stem was studded with their shafts. The better to see the course of the ship-to-ship and man-to-man struggle the undaunted commander was compelled to raise for a moment the visor of his helmet.

It was an unhappy moment. A Turkish arrow pierced his right eye. He sank to the deck. His nephew Marco Contarini boarded his uncle's galley with his men, and the flagship became the scene of the most furious struggle of a memorable hour. Contarini, rushing to his fallen uncle's side, was slain. Dire confusion followed; and the concentrated fire of the Turks more than once swept the deck of the flagship completely clear of defenders.

The crisis was acute. Should the flagship be taken there would be grave danger of rolling up the whole left wing and Turkish victory would inevitably follow. Bending every effort to overwhelm Barbarigo's ship, the Turks in yelling hordes came on to capture or sink it. With Scirocco leading his Janissaries, they boarded La Capitana, determined to take it. The Venetians, with cries of rage and defiance, resisted them.

All was hand-to-hand butchery. A noble Venetian, Frederigo Nani, assuming command by order of the fatally wounded Barbarigo, rallied his men and beat the Janissaries back. Scirocco was driven from the

flagship deck to his own ship. The frenzied Venetians pursuing him, slew his personal defenders and rushing him to the gunwale of his own galley, struck off his head. With the blood spurting from his neck, they threw the body into the water and made a prize of his ship. The unhappy Scirocco never reached the "puppy" prince.

Horror piled on horror. The Venetians were still athirst for vengeance. With their battle cry ringing from man to man, the nobles and fishermen of St. Mark snatched off their helmets and cast away their shields the better to close with their hated butchers. Pushing the turn in the battle tide to the utmost, neither asking nor giving quarter, the struggle was arm to arm, knife to knife, eye to eye and tooth to tooth.

Panic followed upon the death of Scirocco. Turning their prows toward shore, such of his galleys as could escape the slaughter, grounded and their men jumping ashore tried to hide among the rocks. From Turkish galleys, hard pressed and unable to make the refuge, Turkish soldiers sprang overboard and were shot and stabbed in the water. The Gulf was a sea of blood. The Venetians chased their enemies from rock to rock and slew them pitilessly. One enraged pursuer armed with a pointed stick, pinned his Turkish victim through the mouth, to the ground.

Hardly had Scirocco clashed so disastrously with the Venetians, when the centres met. The genius of the young Spanish chief in removing the fore-peaks of his galleys now became apparent. While the forecastle guns of the Turks were of necessity elevating their shots and their balls were flying over the heads of their enemy, Don John's forecastle artillery was sending a deadly fire point-blank into the Ottoman hulls around

the water line—the more murderous because the Turkish galleys were crammed with men above and below decks.

Both Ali and Don John had ordered their helmsmen to steer for the enemy flagship.

"Stand by with the grappling-irons!" was the Spaniard's order to Coronada, who stood beside him.

"Stand by with the grappling-irons!" shouted the captain in turn to the officers of the prow.

Hardly had the order been relayed and executed when the Sultana was upon them. Clouds of arrows flew from its ranks of archers and fell in hail on the Royal defenders. Murderous Janissaries, since their custom was to fire but once and close with the knife, throwing matchlocks aside, bared their teeth and whetted their scimitars in anticipation of Christian blood. Conspicuous on the quarter-deck of the Sultana, and far above the screaming host, Don John recognized the martial figure of the Capitan Pasha, Ali—stern in bearing, instant in action—shouting orders thick and fast to his staff below.

Half a galley's length from the Royal, the Sultana fired three heavy guns in quick succession. The first discharge passed harmlessly above the kitchen. The second shot splintered the longboat. The third tore through the prow gunwale. The Royal answered with a salvo that swept the Sultana amidships and carried away a part of the quarter-deck. But the Sultana lunging ahead with a final swift onset, left the men of the Royal barely time to jump to cover before it rammed them.

The two galleys struck with a terrific impact. In the deafening crash, the prow of the Sultana, with the entangled ships rocking violently, overrode the Spanish

forecastle and towered high above it. The galley peak tore through the rigging of the Royal till its point poised above the fourth rowing bench.

With a shout, Figueroa threw the irons over the Sultana's gunwale and his men made fast the chains and grapnels. In the rebound, the Sultana tried to back away for a second effort to ram and sink the Spaniard. Timbers crashed and ear-splitting yells rent the heavy musketry fire and a curtain of arrows covered the Spaniards. But the Sultana could not shake itself free from the irons; it was forced to fight enmeshed with the Royal as it lay, and from Ali's forecastle, the Turkish arquebusiers poured a murderous fire on the Christians. Thus jammed, the flagships fought their own bloody battle.

Lope de Figueroa, commanding at the Royal prow, was forced to ask for help. Leading a fresh force, amid the confusion of the slaughter, to his aid, Cardenas, urging his men on, fell dying while Turkish arrows sung and hissed in a hail across the disputed forecastle—masts and spars bristled with their shafts as a porcupine bristles with quills.

The constant musketry fire following the artillery salvos, enveloped Turk and Christian, sea and sky, galley and chieftain in dense black smoke. From its deadly centre, as if vomited from hell, came the yells, groans and roars of fighting men. Scimitars, muskets, arquebuses, shields, helmets, turbans, broken oars, lay everywhere scattered about the ships and the sea. Legs, arms, dissevered heads and mutilated bodies flew from the thick pall into the air, fell back into the sea and dyed it with blood, while from the heavy cloud came the cries of men drunk with fury, the screams of wounded, the shouting of the captains and the groans of the dying, while scimitar, axe, cutlass, pike

and dagger were driven through struggling bone and flesh.

Pedro's mate at the port forecastle gun having his left hand torn to shreds by the premature explosion of a grenade, begged a galley slave wearing a long knife to cut it off. The slave refused; the wounded gunner, seizing the knife, cut off the hand, ran to the cook's quarters, caused a live fowl to be opened, thrust the bleeding stump into it, had it tied up; and filling his wounded arm with grenades, hurried back to repel boarders.

A sick sergeant on the Royal, lying below and hearing the rush of the Turks overhead, leaped from his bunk with the cry, "Why die of a fever?" He snatched a weapon, dashed up the ladder, killed four Janissaries, and drove their companions to the mast. With nine arrows in his body and a leg gone, he supported himself on a rowing bench, crying to his comrades, "Each of you do as much!" and pitched over dead. A Spaniard, shot in the eye with an arrow, plucked out the barb with the eye on it, rolled a cloth round his head, tied it with a garter and was the first man to board the Sultana.

Among Figueroa's men, on the Royal, there fought a woman disguised as a musketeer. True to the spirit that had impelled her to such a life, the amazon not only used her firelock with effect, but was among the first to answer the call for boarders. She ran up a cat-ladder and leaped among the Janissaries on the Pasha's deck where she slew a Turk in a hand-to-hand fight.

Again and again the Turks tried to free their flagship from the Spanish irons; they could not. From the higher deck of the Sultana swarming Janissary butchers threw themselves down to the Royal deck in scores only to be cut and thrust, stabbed, impaled,

sabered and hurled into the sea by the frenzied Sardegnians.

Inflamed to a demoniac fury, Pedro, naked, grimed and bloody, left his gun when it became useless at close quarters, and with cutlass and dagger fell on the Janissaries at the netting. As he struck right and left, he headed a rally that momentarily cleared the prow.

Don John was fighting like a common soldier with cutlass and dagger at the foot of the mainmast, to defend with his life the sacred azure standard above. He perceived the advantage opened by Pedro. A renewed sweep of his men cleared the deck of the Royal.

Shouting he ordered Figueroa and Monçada who had regained the forecastle, to board the Sultana. But to see on their lives that no harm came to Ali Pasha. With the battle cry of Spain ringing on their hot lips, the gallant captains, rallying their men, blew an opening with hand grenades to divide the crowded ranks on the Sultana's deck. A score of Spaniards, daggers in teeth, Pedro foremost, ran like cats and monkeys up broken spars and shattered rigging, or made themselves into human ladders and with cries rivalling the yells of the enemy, leaped in twos and threes and dozens on the Sultana deck.

Stabbed and slashed, pierced with arrows and grappled by Janissaries, on the Sardegnians came with two replacing every one that fell. The decks of the enemy ships became a single battle-ground. Twice the Spaniards drove the desperate Janissaries back to their own mainmast and twice they were in turn forced to give way, disputing the ground inch by inch along the blood-slippery planking whence there was neither escape or succor, neither mercy nor refuge save only in death.

It was the supreme crisis of the battle. Nowhere on the wide waters of the Gulf was there now order or formation; there was no longer a right, a left or a centre. In every direction fire was licking up blazing galleys; great palls of smoke out of which came glimpses of vessels locked in deadly conflict, vomiting cries and flames and death; masts and rigging crashing down on men grappling in savage struggle—and the living in the clutches of the dead, tumbling with them into the sea.

In the midst of this terrific struggle on the deck of the Sultana, a galley emerging from the central chaos of horrors rammed the prow of the Sultana, crashing past the Ottoman peak to the third bench of rowers. It was Marcantonio Colonna's flagship. At the same time the watchful Santa Cruz of the reserve crashed into the Sultana on the starboard beam. Heartened by the timely aid, the Spaniards with fresh fury fell upon the masses of Janissaries, constantly fed up by ladders from the Ottoman galleys at the Sultana's stern.

Back and forth on the Pasha's deck the conflict raged. Pedro, slashing with a tremendous two-handed sword seized from the hand of a dying comrade, cut his way to the Turkish mainmast before he could be driven back. The Christians shouting victory, struck like a great wave against the Pasha's redoubtable body-guard until Ali, himself, springing from his quarter-deck, led his men against the swarming boarders and twice repulsed them.

For an instant, a concentrated fire of musketry swept the Pasha's deck almost clear of defenders. Deck and gangway flowed with blood. Men slipping and floundering, fought above corpses that cluttered their footing or were thrown among the rowers.

Turkish scream was met with Spanish war cry until above the thud of death blows and the shrieks of the wounded, there rose from the Spaniards a shout, loud and prolonged, drowning all else.

The helmet of Don John of Austria rose above the Pasha's bulwark. Battle-ax in hand, his men wildly acclaiming him, he leaped down to the slippery deck and with a warning shout dashed into the thickest of the fight. To Pedro he passed the word he had come to bring: "Warn your men, Pedro! No harm to the Pasha!"

Ali, driven back to the quarter-deck surrounded by the flower of his men, stood at bay. He caught sight of the brilliant armor of the Christian commander and seizing a bow and arrow from the hand of an archer, drew to the head and winged a shaft at his enemy doing such deadly execution among his Janissaries.

The Capitan Pasha, with Moslem fatalism, perhaps foresaw the inevitable end. He snatched from his breast a box of precious jewels, flung it out on the blood-covered waves, and, scimitar in hand, sprang down among his men to reach the hated plume splashed with Turkish blood, of the Christian commander.

As he pressed forward, Don John in his turn made superhuman efforts to reach the Pasha, shouting hoarse orders not to harm him.

It was not to be. With the two leaders battling almost within sword's length of each other and in the midst of wild carnage all about, a musket ball struck the Pasha in the forehead. He staggered and fell prone on the gangway. Don John, slashing through the Janissaries cut his way to the wounded man's side, and with Pedro's two-handed sword swinging above him, knelt and caught up the wounded man in his arms.

The Bravest of the Brave lay unconscious. With the

fight raging around them, the victor chieftain ordered his fallen enemy carried to his own cabin on the Royal, there to be attended by his own surgeon. And with the gravest warning against carelessness or disobedience, he left the Pasha in Pedro's care and seizing his battle-ax plunged again into the combat.

Losing sight momentarily of the plume of their Commander, the Sardegnians had been driven from the Sultana quarter-deck; only a handful of young Spanish nobles held the ground about their chief. Yells of triumph and revenge again rose from the Turks as they came on in fresh numbers, and Don John led his men at them. The head of a Turkish captain rose above the Pasha's rail. His bloodshot eyes fell on Don John at the moment the plumed Commander saw him and recognized in the evil and disfigured face, de Castro, the Spanish renegado.

Leaping over the battered bulwark, de Castro lunged forward. "Mongrel!" he cried, discharging a pistol at the Commander. The ball deflected by Don John's cuirass struck down a Sardegnian at his side. "Have you stomach now for your deserts?" yelled de Castro, flashing his scimitar.

"Dog!" cried the Commander, with the contempt and hatred of a life-long enmity. "This time, I finish your portrait."

If bitterness were needed to add to the rage of the Spanish prince, it came in the swift recollection of the renegado's attempt to steal Miriam; if aught were needed to strengthen his arm, that furious thought supplied it. With a cutlass, Don John turned a downward slash of the renegado's scimitar that was meant to cleave his skull. Both in their left hands carried daggers. Their combat became so furious that the young Spanish noblemen paused involuntarily. Pedro

held off the Spanish soldiers and de Castro's Janissaries could not pass the Sardegnian wall.

The deck planking, greased to ward off attack, gave equal trouble to the two men in their furious encounter. Springing, slipping, feinting like lightning, they fought until de Castro realized he no longer had a merely clever tyro to overcome. The blows rained on him by the cutlass seemed delivered by sinews of steel. Don John, unlike his usual tactics, forced the fighting. Not a moment could de Castro spare to take an offensive. Hatred, deep as the human heart can compass, incited each to slay the other. For de Castro there was no longer retreat. Completely cut off, he fought with the ferocity of a beast at bay. Fresher than his antagonist because until now in the reserve, he yet suffered from the instinct of defeat, which he felt all about him, and from his failure to deliver a single telling blow to disable his enemy.

Desperate at last, he sprang at Don John to break through his attack. Don John feinted and before de Castro could recover, passed his enemy's guard with a stroke that cleft the right shoulder and arm almost from the body. The renegado, scimitar and dagger in hand, sank against the bulwark with an imprecation. His eyes, as he bled from the mouth, distended with rage. Still clutching his weapons and glaring helplessly at his enemy, he cursed him. A shudder passed over him as he did so. Dagger and scimitar dropped from his nerveless hands. Pitching forward on his face, he lay dead.

Don John, grimed with powder-stain, blood and sweat, slashed his way to the mainmast and pointed to the Prophet's white-and-green standard floating above. Figueroa jumped to the signal halyards and lowered the beautiful symbol, bullet-riddled, of the most de-

graded empire that ever threatened the civilization of Christendom, crying "Victory." It was a moment supreme in the history of Europe.

Regaining the forecastle deck of the Royal, where the azure standard of the League floated still untouched even by an arrow-point, Don John was hailed by Marcantonio Colonna from his own galley. "You have the lion! I have the cubs," called the Roman gaily.

"Cubs?" echoed Don John.

"I have the two sons of Ali Pasha, and their tutor Mahomet, and their five servants! We took them off the galley of Scirocco, King of Negropont!"

"My compliments, Admiral!" cried Don John. "As an act of charity, put the party aboard with me. Their father is dying, I fear, in my cabin. Our right wing is in trouble, Marcantonio. Follow me, fast!"

CHAPTER LIII

MACULA CARENS

It was a victory not yet consummated. With a remnant of shrieking Turks begging in their blood for mercy, Don John hurried to the poop of the Sultana to survey from its height the situation along his far-flung battle line.

On the left wing, the survivors of the few galleys of Scirocco that had escaped destruction, were desperately attempting to save themselves by grounding their ships, in order that they might escape ashore. Fleeing from the vengeful Venetians, the unhappy wretches were mercilessly hunted. When they sprang overboard their pursuers jumped into the waves after them to stab or strangle them as they swam. The piercing shriek of a Janissary would smite the waters as a stronger swimmer overtook him and their struggle followed. Sinking under the waves, a Venetian grappling with him in the death struggle would disappear until, after a moment, the head of the hardy fisherman of St. Mark would emerge from the waves, his deadly knife between his teeth as he shook his long, black, wet hair and struck out with his brown arms. Beside him on the water a green turban floating, a slowly widening pool of blood, little bubbles of air rising to the surface would tell the story that everywhere was being told along the waters of the Bloody Cape.

But to the anxious eyes of the young Commander the more distant right wing told a different story.

Doria, astute Genoese Admiral, with his sixty-four galleys, opposed by the more astute Aluch with ninety-three galleys, had already been lured out to sea, far enough to open an inviting breach between the right wing and the League centre. It was this breach that Don John had seen widening and appalled by its possibilities, had tried vainly to close.

Toward this gap, the crafty renegado, suddenly reversing his movement, made with all speed and into it launched the weight of his fleet. This flattened the two League ends he was turning and put him in the rear of the Christian line.

The extreme right of Don John's centre was held by the Maltese squadron, Prior Giustiniani, in the Capitana de Malta, commanding. On this devoted Knight fell the full fury of the result of Doria's blunder. Giustiniani had already captured four Turkish galleys. But the conspicuous white cross standard, stately above the smoke of battle, attracted the evil eye of the master pirate.

The disaster was terrific. Wheeling like a hawk, Aluch bore down on the unhappy Prior. The three already exhausted Maltese galleys were an easy prey for the seven fresh galleys of Aluch. Boarded by overwhelming numbers, fighting like tigers against overwhelming odds, the Knights were slaughtered. A Saragozan Knight, riddled with arrows, fought with such ferocity that no enemy boarder ventured to approach him till certain that he was dead. Another leaped aboard an enemy galley, killed four Turks, and defended himself until overpowered by fresh foes. On the Prior's galley he, himself, pierced with five arrows, was the sole survivor, save a Spanish Knight with both legs broken and a Sicilian whose arm had been severed by a battle-ax—both of whom lying unconscious from

their wounds were thought dead. Aluch in grisly triumph hauled down the hated banner of the Knights of Malta, ran up the Crescent, and took the captured flagship in tow.

Doria, stupefied by the result of his folly, made haste to the scene of the debacle. But Don John, though wounded, was already there and throwing himself into the fight to rescue his brave followers, turned the tide of battle. Barbarians fight very much alike; they are ferocious in attack and merciless in follow-up. But once let the idea of defeat get into the head of the barbarian, and if he can get away, he will run like a rabbit. The spirit and the discipline that inspire civilized men to defend a cause in the face of certain defeat, have no counterpart in barbarian warfare.

Before the whirlwind counter-attack of Don John, Aluch's Algerine pirates melted away. Only one ambitious captain attempted to resist the ebbing tide of success. Imitating his master, he rallied sixteen of the Algerine galleys and sweeping well around to the southern shore of the Gulf, tried to reach the rear of the Christians. The watchful Juan de Cardona perceived the movement and with the courage of a brave man against desperate odds—the particular brand of courage that characterized Lepanto—sped with his eight galleys, all he had, to confront the oncoming sixteen.

The encounter was the bloodiest of a bloody day. Cardona plunged at the Algerine. Leading his undaunted followers to the conflict in his flagship, La Capitana de Sicilia, inspiring them by his words and example, he fought till he overwhelmed the enemy and capture or dispersed the sixteen.

He paid the price. A cuirass of fine steel, given him at Genoa by Francesco de Medici, Prince of Tuscany,

turned the ball of an arquebus; but a fatal wound in the throat later claimed his life. Of the five hundred Sicilian soldiers on board his galley, fifty only remained unwounded. Of the galley itself, the forecastle was a ruin, the bulwarks and defenses were shot to pieces. Such of the masts as were left, bristled with the shafts of Turkish arrows.

La Piamontesa, a Savoyard galley, lost her commander and every soldier and rower. On La Fierenza, a Roman galley, every soldier and every slave was killed, and the captain, a Medici, found himself commanding seventeen wounded seamen. In the San Giovanni, another Roman galley, every soldier was killed. The rowing benches were manned by dead men and the captain was laid for dead with two musket balls in his neck.

Of this shattered right wing of the League, ten galleys had been sunk and one was in flames. Twelve floated on the waves, drunkenly, without rudder or guidance, swept clear of masts, defenses and rigging and filled with corpses. These twelve, with their dead, were already strung in line with Turkish hawsers to be towed from the field by Aluch when Don John in furious haste reached the scene. Courting death with his battle-cry, "Santiago," and with a laugh on his lips, he jammed the nose of the Royal into the thick of disaster, and his mad Sardegnians fell upon the enemy. Following him close on the quarter, came the Marquess of Santa Cruz with the whole reserve.

Aluch, with the helpless Prior Giustiniani and his ship, the Capitana de Malta, in tow, perceiving his battle lost and realizing that Don John himself had reached the scene, cut away his prize leaving the sorely wounded Prior-Knight again in the hands of friends, and once more master of his vessel on which were

counted three hundred of his dead enemies, a prize crew of Algerine mariners, and a handful of Turkish soldiers from whom he had just purchased his life and who now, in panic, sued at his hands for their own.

Aluch, scaly bird of prey, thought only of escape. Pushing his son into his own galley, he hoisted all sail, and himself at the tiller, fled the defeat. With scimitars at their throats, he drove his panting oarsmen till he took their last breaths before they fell from their benches with exhaustion. But he made headway enough to escape the wrath of his youthful pursuer who, aided by Santa Cruz, was hot after him.

Now five o'clock, night was coming on. Storm that had been brooding over the smoke of battle was about to break. Short gusts of wind, darting lightning and sharp crashes of thunder, gave warning to the vengeful Don John that he must look to his own ships lest his victory issue in disaster from the elements; and he hastened back to the center. Thus, the famed renegado escaped "on the wings of the tempest."

It was the last phase of the Battle of Lepanto. That the storm which saved Aluch from just retribution did not destroy the now victorious Christian fleet, was owing, if not to an act of Providence, to the long head of its youthful Generalissimo. The happy galleys of the Armada were moving in reckless confusion over the wide Gulf, visiting one another, repairing damages, collecting and succoring the wounded, chaining their thousands of captive Turks and making secure the enormous booty stored and secreted in the one hundred and seventy-eight captured galleys. Men were already recounting stories of their fights and officers in their cabins were sitting over their wine while surgeons bound up their wounds.

Don John ordered an alarm gun fired from the

Royal. The division flagships repeated the signal. Captains hurried to their posts; and hastening the moment with all possible despatch, Don John ordered every ship of the fleet to head with all speed for the harbor of Petala.

On a sea where men had been bloodily contending for more than two thousand years, never had human eye beheld such carnage as Don John of Austria looked upon when his oarsmen returned the Royal to the scene.

Far and wide the waters of the Gulf rolled in blood. Far and wide they were strewn with battle-débris and wreckage; splintered mast and tangled shroud, blood-drenched rowing-bench, shivered plank, shattered rudder, crumpled sail, floating poop, the fallen yard and the broken oar. Bows, quivers, arrows, shields, the peak of the galley, the color of the Knight, the splendid robe of the Pasha, the rag of the galley slave and the scarf of the Venetian noble, tossed in the waves among stoven casks, huge Turkish drums and bedraggled plumes of Janissaries. A sea of turbans floated among human hands and legs and arms, pitched overboard as galleys were cleaned up. Wounded men and dying men who after the battle kept afloat on fragments of wreckage, dared not cry for help lest they bring the thrust of a pike from some hardened boatman, fishing his spoil out of the angry waters. Above the horror of the sea rose the lurid flame and bellowing smoke of burning galleys and the sudden flash and roar of exploding magazines as they heaved masses of wreckage into the air to scatter them again over the troubled Gulf.

With almost the last of the laggard, jostling, shouting galleys headed for safety, Don John's eyes scanning the Gulf in the failing light, fell on one galley

apart from the others, drifting aimlessly. That it had suffered severely was evident. Its masts, levelled as if by a hurricane, lay in a welter of spars and rigging athwart the deck; the forecastle was a ruin, the poop had disappeared, the bulwarks were punched like sieves and the defenses completely shot away.

Annoyed at what seemed disobedience of orders, the Commander asked sharply what galley that was. No one at hand could tell him. But a longboat, carrying a galley captain and darting among the moving vessels, drew alongside the flagship. As the captain came aboard and saluted, Don John hailed him.

"What galley is that?" he asked pointing to the derelict.

"That, Your Highness," answered the man addressed, speaking very slowly, "is the Black Galley. I have just come from it."

"Can you tell me," demanded Don John tartly, "why its captain disobeys my orders?"

"Highness," replied the captain, deliberately and hoarsely, "every officer on the Black Galley is dead; every soldier on it is dead; the rowing benches of the Black Galley are manned by the dead. You do not recognize me, Highness," he continued patiently.

Don John realized the reproachful note in the voice. "Come up here, then, my captain, to my side," he said. "The light is failing. Tell me who you are."

Blood-and-powder grimed, his beard torn half away, his bloodshot eyes inflamed with powder burns and smoke, that which a few hours before had been a resplendent uniform now blood-clotted, the slashed and ragged covering of a half-naked man,—in this guise the unrecognizable captain climbed painfully to the quarter-deck and saluted his general. Don John started. He perceived now, fastened to the side of the crum-

pled, spotted hat of the captain, what seemed to be a glove.

"Now I can see, my captain. You wear my glove!" he cried with a welcome. "You are Giuseppi."

Again the man shook his head. "Not Giuseppi, Your Highness," he answered more slowly still. "I am Benito. The Black Galley you ask about is the galley of Giuseppi, my brother."

"Pray then, Benito, tell me of your brother."

"He lies in his galley, Your Highness," said Benito steadily, "among his men."

Don John laid his hand heavily on the captain's shoulder.

The swarthy Sicilian spoke on. His voice never broke, but tears rolled slowly down his stained cheeks as he held out his hand.

"Your Highness, if you recollect, gave a ring to my brother. You bade him wear it to-day. The Black Galley was the last on the centre right, Your Highness. It took the fury of Aluch's attack, when Doria left us unprotected. Five galleys turned their fire on Giuseppi. After the fight, I boarded the Black Galley. My brother was then the only man on it alive, and he —was dying. He asked me to draw this ring from his finger—the one finger on his right hand that had not been shot away. 'Take it,' he said, 'to my Generalissimo. Tell him I wore it, this day, *'without blemish.'* "

Don John looked on the blood-stained token as it was laid in his hand. "Macula Carens!" he repeated at length slowly. "Give me your hand, Benito. Since Giuseppi has so worn my ring," he continued, slipping the bauble on the forefinger of the Sicilian's right hand, "do you, Benito, now wear it, and hereafter keep it, 'without blemish.' "

Hardly had the last of the laggard galleys found

shelter within the harbor of Petala, before the storm burst in violence. All night the sea was lashed by heavy winds. But the foresight and prudence of its Generalissimo had again saved the fleet.

Nor had he forgotten for a moment the august prisoner to whom he had surrendered his cabin and commended to the care of his chief surgeon, Gregorio Lopez. Once within the harbor, he sent for Lopez for a report on the wounded Pasha.

The surgeon was not hopeful. When pressed he told his commander that his prisoner was fatally hurt. Not only had he been struck by a musket ball but he had sustained five cutlass wounds in the terrific hand-to-hand fighting on his flagship. Leaving the quarter-deck as he was—still in armor and accompanied by Figueroa, Lopez and Monçada, Don John descended to his cabin. The door was thrown open and Figueroa announced, Don John of Austria.

The name was repeated by Captain Coronada who with a lieutenant and three men stood within, in charge of the cabin. The men and officers came to attention and the Generalissimo advanced into the room.

The Pasha lay on Don John's bed. He had been placed by the surgeons partly on his side, the better to control the bleeding of his wounds. Beside him knelt the assistant surgeon of the Royal, and Ali's own Turkish surgeon. Two lads in bedraggled Turkish uniform, the one of perhaps fifteen, the younger of thirteen years, were on their knees close to the stricken Pasha. Both were weeping, the elder in silence, the younger sobbing violently as he clung to his father's hand. Don John surmised their identity—they were the sons of Ali, captured by Marcantonio Colonna on the galley of the King of Negropont and by the General-

issimo's request brought with their tutor to the Royal to be with their father. In the background their tutor, Mahomet, stood with folded arms, dark-skinned, mute and impassive.

When Don John of Austria was sternly announced, Mahomet, started, and bowing profoundly to the slender figure in the doorway, hastened to the weeping lads. In a few low words, he bade them rise, salute the Commander-in-Chief, and fall back.

At the sound of the name, so fatal to his day's dream of glory, the wounded Pasha had with an effort opened his eyes. As the surgeons stood back and he saw his helmeted conqueror advancing toward him, the sorely weakened Turkish chief tried to raise himself to his elbow to acknowledge the victorious presence.

Don John put out his hand as if to say he must make no attempt to rise. Reaching the bedside, while Figueroa and Monçada with Lopez remained some paces behind, the League Commander, raising his visor, sank on one knee beside the low bed.

The eyes of the two men met for the last time. The Kabarda Prince, his turban and jeweled helmet lying beside him, his gay white-and-brocaded vesture slashed to ribbons and splashed with great blotches of blood, breathing painfully and wan of feature, looked carefully into the face of his enemy. Amazement shook the frame of the failing man.

He could find but a single word as he recognized his victorious foe. "Parda!" he gasped.

"I, Pasha. You are wounded."

Ali smiled faintly. "Dying. Kader—it is my fate!"

"No, Pasha! You shall keep my cabin, my bed. Your surgeon and mine shall save you!"

The fast-sinking man, grasping Don John's arm,

drew himself up convulsively. He tried to speak. "Too late!" he murmured in Spanish; and he closed his eyes, "Miriam!"

Pent-up feeling burst forth in Don John's quick words. "I shall be to Miriam, Your Highness, all that you have been," he exclaimed as he caught her father's hand. "I shall claim her for my bride. When I win a throne, Miriam, your Princess, shall sit beside me. She shall be mother of princes! And your sons shall go home without ransom."

A pressure of the hand answered. But exhausted by the effort of recognition and speaking, the Pasha sank into unconsciousness. Don John, rising, imperiously motioned the surgeons forward and watched anxiously while they strove to arrest the death moment.

Again the Pasha rallied. So stubborn was the ebbing strength of the indomitable warrior that it seemed impossible for his spirit to escape. Of the surgeons, only Ali's own expressed no surprise at his amazing vitality. More than once he lapsed into coma only to revive and live again in delirium the hours of the day's Titanic struggle. Again he cried his orders to his captains; again he ordered his galleys to follow and called on his Janissaries to board.

Outside the tiny cabin, rocking in the violence of the storm, the tempestuous night of wind and rain was rent by deafening peals of thunder and blinding crashes of lightning. Leading the grief-stricken boys back to their father's side, Don John of Austria waited patiently hour after hour for the return of a fleeting moment of reason: it did not come.

Shortly after midnight the Turkish surgeon drew away from his failing chief; the end was at hand. In that little room were grouped about the death-bed men who had made history on that eventful day—the noble

Roman, Colonna; Requesens the ever-watchful; Santa Cruz, tower of strength, and that future "thunderbolt of war," Prince Alessandro Farnese; while closest beside the dying man knelt the victor of Lepanto, Don John of Austria, supporting in his arms his dying foe.

"Forward!" cried the "Bravest of the Brave" in a last wild moment. But the weakened heart could no longer answer to its master's command. It faltered; halted; struggled once more to heed the stern order; and with the shattered body racked by a final shudder, lay still within it.

CHAPTER LIV

THE SEA OF BLOOD

On Sunday night darkness brooded over a sea reddened by the blood of fifty thousand men.

Even the staggering casualities of the battle give but a faint idea of the ferocity with which it was contested. Gentlemen fought like common soldiers side by side with ear-ringed fishermen of Venice and swarthy muleteers of Tarragona. The flower of the nobility of Southern Europe shed their blood at Lepanto. To avert the ruin of Christendom, princes of the blood led boarders and knights with sixteen quarterings grappled hand-to-hand and stabbed dagger-to-dagger the unlettered Janissaries of Selim.

History records that among the thirty thousand Turks slain at Lepanto two hundred were officers of rank. Thirty of these were governors of provinces and one hundred and sixty were beys and captains. In the battle the Christians lost nearly eight thousand men; and of their fifteen thousand wounded, poisoned arrows and lack of attendance took two thousand five hundred more. Of all the Turkish chiefs, not killed or taken, only the renegade Aluch and the Seraskier Pertau Pasha remained. Of thirty-seven Turkish galleys commanded by officers entitled to display their lanterns of rank at the stern, but three escaped capture or destruction. Of the entire Turkish fleet, only thirty galleys, all of them badly punished, escaped; ninety-nine were sunk in the gulf or burned by the Venetians

after they had been grounded; one hundred and seventy-eight remained in the hands of the victors; and fifteen thousand Christian galley slaves, mad with joy, were freed from the Turkish oar.

For days after the battle the sea gave up its dead; bodies of the slain at Lepanto floated as far as the distant waters of Crete.

On anchoring within the harbor of Petala, after the fight, the flagship of Don John was soon crowded with the chiefs of the fleet, eager to offer congratulations to the Generalissimo. Since Veniero did not come, Don John sent to him a special invitation. The gallant veteran promptly responded and when the young Chief met the old man at the top of the ladder, embraced him and addressed him as *Padre Mio,* the Venetian's eyes were dimmed with tears. Sebastian Veniero was old enough to be Don John's grandfather; but despite their disputes, they had fought that day side by side like Benito and Giuseppi.

The next care of the Chief was the wounded. To those of his flagship he gave up a part of his own quarters and issued orders that the first and best of everything should be supplied to the suffering among the fleet.

There was little supper that night on the flagship. The kitchen had been shot to pieces. It was impossible to kindle a fire. Don John and his juniors supped, like galley slaves, on dry biscuit. But no one rebelled at the scanty fare and each around the empty table contributed his share of anecdote to the high moments.

The talk turned on the chaplains and friars of the fleet. Veniero vouched for one Spanish Capuchin, an old soldier, who had tied his crucifix to a halbert and crying, "Christ and the Faith!" led the boarders of his galley over the bulwarks of her antagonist and after

using his weapon vigorously, returned victorious and untouched.

To match the veteran's generosity in naming a Spaniard, Requesens instanced a Venetian priest who, crucifix in one hand and sword in the other, cheering the men stood in the centre of the arrows' sleet and the iron hail, unharmed.

Colonna had a story of a Roman Capuchin, who, with his men giving way before the enemy, seized a boat-hook, pulled his peaked hood about his face, rushed into the fray and laid about him till he had slain seven Turks—and lived that night to tell Colonna his story.

Of the clergy and friars who ministered on the decks to the wounded and dying, not one, although they exposed themselves as freely as the combatants, was killed.

Curiously enough, not a crucifix on the whole fleet, so far as those present knew, had been hit by the infidel; and later inquiry confirmed the fact. But that night, Don John topped all the crucifix anecdotes with one concerning the half-burned crucifix given him by Don Luis which he had affixed to the standard of the Royal staff. In the heat of the conflict between the flagships, two arrows stuck in the staff, close to the crucifix itself. "My pet monkey, Selim, which you all have been chaffing me about, saw what had happened. Believe it or not, as you like—but I pledge you my word, I saw it—he ran up the staff like lightning, pulled out the arrows and broke them *with his teeth.*"

While the chiefs fared that night mostly on the glory of the victory, the soldiers and sailors who had come unharmed through the bloody day, passed it in merriment and drink. Discipline was relaxed and they roamed at will from galley to galley for news

and felicitations, drowning in sour wine their sorrow for comrades dead; pledging health to their wounded and drinking confusion and death to all Turks.

The two sons of the dead Pasha had been given the cabin of Don John's secretary, Juan de Soto. It was one of the best on the ship and Don John after the death of Ali sent for Mahomet, their tutor, and ordered the boys, Ahmed Bey and Mahomet Bey, brought before him. The two flung themselves at his feet, the younger bathed in tears. He bade them rise and spoke to them kindly, Mahomet translating. He told them how he mourned the death of the brave Pasha and how earnestly he had striven to avert it. He reminded them of the nobility of their father's character, respected alike by friend and foe, and exhorted them to bear up under their sorrow and walk worthy of their forebear.

Dismissing them, he sent presently for Mahomet alone. "You are aware," said he in Spanish to the still terrified scholar, "that I have no means of returning the body of Ali to—I cannot say his native land, because Turkey, as you know, was not his native land —but not even to Constantinople. He was a valiant man. He died a soldier's death and shall have a soldier's burial—his body shall be committed honorably to the sea. I have been in doubt about the two sons. Shall they be present or not at his burial? What think you?"

The Ottoman, considering a moment, answered in Spanish. "Since Your Highness deigns to ask me, I think they might be present. Both of them love the sea. Both, if they live to be exchanged, will doubtless follow in the footsteps of their father."

"Then," said Don John, "let them see a soldier's burial."

"When shall it be, Your Highness?"

"At once. When I send you word, bring the two boys on deck, dressed for the weather. Let their servants remain below. In the morning I will buy for the lads the best Turkish clothing my servants can find among the spoil, that to-morrow they may be suitably attired."

The night continued tempestuous, with thunder and heavy rain, when in response to a summons, the Ottoman tutor brought his charges up from their cabin. A galliot lay alongside the flagship. To this, the body of Ali, prepared for burial, had been transferred and as soon as the burial party and a detail of Sardegnians had boarded it, the vessel stood out to sea. Northeast squalls lashed the Oxia passage, and a driving rain swept the galliot deck. The sky charged with electrical fury, shot its lightning over the face of the waters and peals of thunder rolled down from the mountains along the coast. Slowly and with great caution, the slaves tugging hard at the oars, the galliot made its way toward the Bloody Cape, and the Albanian pilot despite the tumbling seas kept his craft off the rocks.

Don John felt that his foeman should be consigned to the deep where he had fought his last fight. The wild night, besides, suited his own mood and not until the Cape had been rounded would he give the order to bring into the cabin all that remained of the gallant Pasha.

When the orphaned sons saw the canvassed figure laid prone and realized it was their father, the elder stood like a Spartan. But the younger lad, Mahomet, after striving vainly to imitate his brother's stoicism, gave way. He threw himself on the shrouded figure in an outburst of grief. In the uncertain light of the

cabin as the galliot pitched and rolled, the little fellow looked piteously up and spoke to his tutor.

"What does he ask?" demanded Don John almost divining the boy's words.

"Your Highness," answered the Ottoman respectfully, "that he might look once more upon his father's face."

Don John motioned to the sailmaker. The canvas was opened to reveal the dead man's features. Few of the men who stood about—hardened to death though they were—were able to look unmoved on the scene that followed.

When Don John took the boy up in his arms to support him at his side, the body was again made ready for the deep.

Figueroa and Monçada headed the procession to the deck whither the sailors had preceded them. The scene was lighted, as the sailors surrounded the little group, by cressets in which coils of pitched rope sputtered and flared through the rain.

The storm and the deep, quieted for a moment as if to respect the dead. The Sardegnians stood at attention. Don John, surrounded by his officers, kept Mahomet Bey at his side. The boy was Miriam's brother, and his presence in the tragedy of his father's burial brought to Don John, poignantly, thoughts of one far away and now sleeping, perhaps, in ignorance of these last moments of a day so fateful to her.

He drew the little fellow closer within his arm, patting his shoulder tenderly, and gave the signal that shot the dead into the deep. A crackle of musketry flared up into the night, and amid the thunder, the guns of the galliot boomed and the little craft put about. Cared for by Don John, the orphans were soon re-

turned to the shelter of their cabin and the anodyne of the sleep of youth.

In the morning, the Commander ordered a review of the fleet and a report of those killed, wounded and captured. Everywhere he was solicitous for the care of the suffering.

Among the galleys of Doria, the Generalissimo visited the Marquesa. On being met, with due ceremony, by the galley captain and afterward by the much-bandaged captain of the soldiers, Diego de Urbino, he inquired after his hurt, and asked to be taken below to the injured. While the Commander paused to hear their stories, the captain pointed to one young man, pale, and with closed eyes, lying in a hammock above which a rich Turkish banner was displayed.

At this adornment, Don John lifted his eyebrows in surprise. "Pray, whom have we here?" he smiled, looking down on the youth. "You are wounded?" he said sympathetically, as the sufferer's eyes opened.

The young man smiled in return. "The least among my comrades, Your Highness," he replied.

His captain, Diego de Urbino, interposed. "I must explain," he said. "Our Miguel lay only yesterday morning in his bunk, sick of a fever. He got up when he heard the guns and begged permission to fight. I gave him twelve soldiers, and put him with them close to the longboat. It happened, I must say, that they took the hottest of the fire. A ball passed through Miguel's left hand but he tied it up and would not quit. When the order to board came, Miguel was the second on the Algerine galley. A scimitar took the wounded hand off at the wrist, yet the lad brought back this royal standard of Egypt which you see. He has asked to keep it till to-morrow."

"Brave Miguel!" exclaimed Don John. "You shall

have a captaincy. And what is the rest of your name?"

"Miguel de Cervantes Saävedra, Your Highness."

"An honorable name."

"Miguel is a poet, as well, Your Highness," continued the captain. "Though young, he has already written beautiful things."

"How old are you?" Don John addressed the question to the wounded man.

"Twenty-four, Your Highness."

"I am glad he calls you young," commented the Commander, nodding toward the captain, as he spoke to Cervantes. "I, too, am twenty-four—unfortunately I am no longer young. Since you *are* young, Cervantes, something tells me you will yet bring to our beloved Spain, even greater glory than you have brought to-day. Poet and warrior! Excellent! I shall commend you to my brother, the King, as honoring both. But I grieve, my brave countryman, that you have suffered the loss of your left hand."

Cervantes tried to rise on his elbow. His liquid eyes, still burning with shock, glowed at the words. "A trifling price, Your Highness," he made haste to aver, "to pay for the honor of serving under you. And to be one, even the least, in the first great action in which the naval supremacy of the Ottoman has been successfully disputed by Christian arms."

The Commander, pleased, responded promptly. "I must see you again. When you are able, come to my flagship. Miguel de Cervantes Saävedra, I salute you!"

CHAPTER LV

LEPANTO AND AFTER

Not all of the fateful battle of that day had been fought on the waters of Lepanto. Far from the roar of its guns, a gray and aged man, bent with the tortures of acute physical suffering, spent the night before the battle in fasting and prayer, imploring the aid of heaven for the defenders of Christendom.

On the afternoon of that Sunday, Pius V was walking in one of the Vatican halls listening to a report from his treasurer.

Stopping suddenly he stepped, without speaking, to a window, threw it open and looking far across the city stood as if attentively waiting. Within a moment, tears suffused the lifted eyes, and the trembling hands, tightly clasped, were raised toward heaven. Then the pontiff closed the window and with a face transfigured said to his companion:

"A truce to business! Let us now return thanks to God for the victory he has given us over the Turk."

Lepanto was the last great battle in naval history to be fought with galleys. It was probably the last great battle in European history in which a commander-in-chief drew a bow-string.

The sun had risen on the Sunday morning of October 7, 1571, on an Empire rarely surpassed in history in its pride and power—and but three hundred years old; it set on an Empire reeling from a blow that marked the hour of its decline. And when the news of

the overwhelming disaster to his arms reached the besotted Sultan, he neither ate nor drank nor showed himself, nor saw anyone, for three whole days.

It was more than a century later before the Turk knocked again at the gates of Vienna. But in that century the art of war had wholly changed, and in certain respects Lepanto had changed it. In the year following the battle, its only notable naval Turkish survivor, Aluch Ali, the Calabrian, ordered his archers to leave their bows at home; to replace them he provided twenty thousand firelocks. But Don John could never afterward provoke the Ottoman fleet into a general engagement—such had been the terror inspired by Lepanto. And the ambition of a Sultan to feed oats to his horses on the altars of St. Peter's, lies forever buried, with the ribs of his galleys and the bones of his warriors, off the Bloody Cape.

To have fought and won the greatest naval battle of modern times—and to have done it under extremely trying circumstances—should entitle any man to a high place in European story; yet the name of Don John of Austria, and the name of Lepanto itself, are strange to the ears of the English-speaking world.

But in 1571, Europe went mad over the victory and the victor. Don John awoke to find himself, overnight, the most famous man in Christendom. Painting and sculpture vied with poetry in celebrating the victory. And when the guns of Lepanto had grown rusty—more, in fact, than sixty years after the battle, there appeared from the pen of an Englishman, a doggerel in heroic measure consisting of nearly seven hundred verses, glorifying the battle and the hero.

Such adulation never before in Christian history had come from European monarchs, poets and painters, to a nameless youth of twenty-four.

CHAPTER LVI

THE DEMAND FOR MIRIAM

Amid the multiplicity of cares that fell on the shoulders of Don John following Lepanto, was the awarding of prizes to his followers and the division of the enormous spoil that fell into the hands of the victors. With his characteristic generosity he gave away much of the tenth which under the League articles belonged to him. The Sultana alone yielded 150,000 gold sequins and one of the first acts of Don John was to present Doria with two silver gilt ewers filled with these sequins from Ali's store; the insecurity of property in the barbarian empire caused men to carry with them all that was movable in their wealth.

But on one point Don John was adamant and that was the prize-title to the orphaned sons of the Pasha, brothers of Miriam. "One-tenth" of them belonged to him by right. It taxed all of his remarkable diplomacy to acquire by barter, particularly from Venice and Spain, the remaining "nine-tenths" of the boys, so that he could call their flesh and blood his own. From a speculative point of view, the two lads were esteemed good for a ransom of, at least, one hundred thousand crowns.

With the diplomatic skeins all untangled and once able to act as he wished, Don John called the tutor Mahomet to him. The fleet now lay at Messina.

"Make ready, Mahomet," said he, "for a long journey." The face of the scholar blanched. Such words

in his country meant the scimitar or the bowstring. Don John perceived his agitation. "Be not alarmed," he exclaimed. "You are going home to Constantinople."

Mahomet fell prone on his face. "Not so," continued Don John with a trace of impatience; "rise and listen.

"You will ask, Mahomet, what about the ransom? You go home a free man." The tears in the poor Turk's eyes and his uncontrollable emotion interrupted the Commander. "But in return for your liberty you can do me a very great service—greater, indeed, than I am doing you."

"I need scarcely assure Your Highness," declared Mahomet unsteadily, "that if it lies in my power, however great it may be, it is done!"

"I shall not attempt to recount the circumstances that made me when a captive in your country a suitor for the hand of Miriam—daughter of your dead master—nor of the confidence she placed in me in accepting me as such without knowing my identity. It is you who must convey to her reluctant ears, the unwelcome news of the death of her dearly loved father—a tragedy which I unhappily was unable to avert. But I want her to know that he died in my arms and in dying, confided her to my care.

"You will also assure her by word of mouth—as I am doing under seal—that her young brother, Mahomet Bey, and her older brother, Ahmed Bey, are safe and are now wholly in my charge, and will be until she joins both them and me—at which time she will dispose of their future as seems to her best.

"These, then, are the facts, Mahomet. What follows from them is, that my life and my happiness and my fortunes are bound up with those of Miriam, beloved, as you know, of the great Pasha. I must now

send an envoy to your Sultan to ask a safe conduct for Miriam to come to me; it is with this envoy that I wish you to coöperate.

"The best of the Turkish galleys that has fallen to my share of the prizes, is that of Karakosh. Though he fought bravely, his galley came through with only minor damage. It is now being refitted to take you home and to carry under a flag of truce, Don Lope de Figueroa, my envoy, together with his suite and a faithful follower of mine, who though a common sailor, has been close to my fortunes both in adventure and in confidence: he is known as Pedro.

"It is my wish that you present yourself to Sokolli, the vizier, with Don Lope de Figueroa who will lay before him my formal request. He in turn will advise his Imperial Highness, Selim.

"My envoy will point out to the vizier that which is simple justice in this case. Beyond that, Mahomet, he will direct his attention to what possibilities arise from a peaceful alliance that may be to the advantage of the Empire and to the tranquillity of Europe: on these possibilities, I need not enlarge. Miriam is, as you know, a princess in her own right and the thought of an alliance with the House of Austria needs no enlargement from me. You follow me?"

"Indeed, Your Highness, I follow you perfectly."

"But if all argument fail, there remains the consideration of the result of the refusal. His Imperial Highness must ask himself: Do I want an undying enemy in Don John of Austria? It is not my habit to threaten, since threats are unbecoming. But the Sultan, and the vizier, must know that if justice be denied me, they leave me no alternative other than to bring a fleet next spring to Cyprus and thence to the Dardanelles and thus submit the justice of my request to the decision

of arms. And I need not tell you, Mahomet, of myself, simply as myself; but I may tell you of my father and of the House of Austria, that they have always had long memories.

"I ask, indeed, for little; but to refuse it, may mean much. You are a scholar and acquainted with history; you know how often the fate of an empire has turned on the fate of a woman."

Concerning the vague fear that at times clutched him, Don John made no mention. It would be useless. But to Figueroa he unbosomed his dread. "You know, Don Lope, what manner of man this wretched Selim is. If he has seized the daughter of the heroic Pasha for his own beastly uses I will feed, so long as life is in me, on revenge. I will devastate his provinces and raze his cities. The name of Don John of Austria shall be as hateful to the Turk as the name of Tamerlane. Nor will I cease till I drag him from his drunken throne and the dogs of his city gnaw his bones."

Figueroa had never seen a passion tear at his chief as that which darkened his features. "I believe Your Highness abundantly capable of all you say," he exclaimed, as his eyes lighted. "But we are going to hope that everything shall turn out for the best. And to-day I bring good news. Galley, crew, soldiers, suite, Pedro and all are in readiness and we wait now only on the tide and the wind. Before the sun to-morrow morning we shall be out of here. Give me, Your Highness, the letter to fair Miriam. All the other papers as you know are in the hands of my secretary. And from all I hear from our tutor, Mahomet, of Sokolli, I hope for a prosperous adventure."

Before Don Lope left he carried, sealed, a brief message from Don John to be delivered only into Miriam's hand. It apprised her of the tragedy of her dear

father's death which he had so earnestly striven to avert, and assured her of the absolute safety and health and spirits of her two young brothers. It disclosed the secret of his identity which he had never before dared reveal. It repeated those avowals of constancy which coming from the lover reassure the heart of the beloved. "When I look on the rising sun," he wrote, "whenever the promise of a new day brightens gleam by gleam in my hoping heart, I think, Rose of my morning, of you! But the sun will never rise, loved one, in all its glory for us until I clasp you once more in my arms and we watch it burst into the gold of our day together."

It was a devoted message—unhappily, like many another of its tenor, never to be delivered.

CHAPTER LVII

A THRONE?

Nor did weeks ever run into months with more strain on the heart of a lover, than the weeks that followed the despatch of the mission to Constantinople. And as if in irony of his suspense, the round of feasting and entertainments in his honor increased daily. Whatever his own feelings might be, his position as a public personage, the representative of his King and country, rendered it necessary in Messina and Naples to submit to being lionized.

Don John postured thus perforce as the central figure of the elaborate spectacle and gay company however little he enjoyed the distinction. And in the midst of this merrymaking, came a bolt from the blue.

He was still in Messina, where his ships were in process of repair and refitting. One evening a Greek trading vessel furled its sails and dropped anchor in the harbor. The captain brought ashore in the gig a young man who after making enquiries presented himself to Don John's secretary de Soto, and asked for a private interview. This having been accorded, de Soto, dismissing him, promised to lay the import of his message before Don John of Austria.

Late on the following night, well after the city, fatigued by its gaieties, had sunk into slumber, a small boat from the Greek trading vessel landed three men at a disused pier and accompanied by a fourth man,

there awaiting them, walked up from the water front toward the Grand Palazzo where Don John and his suite were lodged. One of the three from the Greek galley was the young man of the previous evening. Of his two companions, one was of venerable years, a man whose dress, long white beard and distinguished bearing marked him as being of consequence among his countrymen. He was slow in movement and felt the effort he was making, but his companions were solicitous in supporting him on the way.

The deputation made no effort to enter any of the portals of the palace; they held their course into a dark street on which one wall of the palace grounds fronted. At the end of this secluded way their guide halted before a low, stout door in the high and forbidding stone wall. Evidently they were expected, for, on a signal rapped by the guide, the door was cautiously opened. The three men passed within and the door behind them closed immediately. They entered the palace in much the same secretive manner and were conducted through long, dark corridors to a large and well-lighted reception room hung with tapestries. Here they were seated and left to wait.

Don John in his own apartments was conferring with Requesens when his visitors were announced. His companion had already been apprised of the request for a very private audience and had expressed some apprehension at the strangeness and secrecy of the mission. And without Don John's knowledge, he had posted a detail of veterans from the flagship behind the reception room tapestries.

Don John laughed as he strapped on a dagger belt and examined with care a pistol before he stuck it into his girdle. "You are always apprehensive, Requesens. Wherefore all these precautions? Why should any-

one—at least anyone but a Turk, wish to assassinate *me?"*

"Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes," quoted Requesens. "You would laugh still more if you knew *all* the precautions I have taken. Assassination? There is nothing so cheap and so easy. Go! my reckless Prince. But before the Helenes drink your blood, we will give them, at least, a bout."

De Soto accompanied Don John, and as the Prince was announced to his visitors, they rose and bowed low. The conference, conducted at the beginning with the utmost reserve, soon developed a startling proposal to the victor of Lepanto. The three men representing Greek Christians, had made the long journey from Albania and the Morea, under great hardships, to offer to Don John the crown of their country and to urge on him the acceptance of it.

"Although now a part of the Turkish Empire," said the patriarch of the emissaries, "our people are virtually enslaved and under a brave and generous ruler would fight for their liberties. Lepanto, Your Highness, has created a panic in the court of Selim.

"This is the acceptable hour—never has there been a crisis in our affairs so auspicious for our aspirations as this. And we pledge Your Highness the loyalty of the Christian people of our land, begging you to accept its sovereignty."

Don John, however taken aback by the amazing tender, preserved his accustomed poise. He responded to the delegation with dignity and expressed appreciation of their confidence. He explained that on a subject of such moment, he must, before rendering a decision, consult with his brother, the King; promising at the same time to his warm-hearted petitioners that they should have an answer at as early a day as pos-

sible. The conversation then took on a less formal tone. The visitors were invited to another room, and the thirsty Sardegnians filed out from behind the arras —much crestfallen at having spilt no blood—to be consoled below stairs by generous libations of Sicilian red.

The Albanians and Don John meantime being joined by Requesens, refreshment was served and after further conversations the callers were returned under guard to their galley.

Don John passed a sleepless night. A throne had already been promised him by Pius V. He knew that the venerable pontiff would not fail of his word if he lived; but the Albanian offer might afford a satisfactory solution. There was in the offer more than the prospect of a lawful ambition gratified. In the veins of Miriam ran the blood of Albanian warriors and princes. What a dream to be realized could he seat her on a throne beside him in the fair land where her ancestors had rightfully reigned before the Turk despoiled their country, robbed its people of their liberty, and ravished its children of their faith only to make of them, as Janissaries, the scourge of their own blood kin.

Day brought less of dreams and more thought of reality. Don John knew only too well the hateful politics of the Madrid court, so long dominated by his enemy Perez—statesman and villain, servant of the blinded King and paramour of the King's own mistress, Marie. But youth, the bloom of strength and success make little of obstacles and Don John duly reported to Philip the events of the night and asked for instructions.

The day, too, brought a surprise even more moving than that of its night. Toward noon a fine Turkish vessel was descried standing in for the harbor. It bore

a flag of truce and its captain on coming ashore begged the privilege of an audience with Don John, declaring that he bore a petition for His Highness' personal hand together with certain presents—both from the sister of his two prisoners, the sons of Ali.

The Palace was thrown into confusion by the rapidity and number of the orders that issued from the suite of His Highness on receipt of the news. Military honors were accorded the officer and his escort. His vessel was saluted and given a preferred place among the ships of the fleet and as soon as possible, with Don John of Austria chafing impatiently, the captain, accompanied by his officers and followed by a detail of unarmed Janissaries, who in turn were escorted by a detachment of Sardegnian veterans, preceded twelve liveried servants bearing gifts. These men wore the household attire of Ali that Don John knew only too well, as he looked down on the dignified procession from the palace window. Admitted, the captain and his two officers salaamed before the dreaded enemy of their people and invoked his favor on their peaceful intrusion.

While Don John held converse apart with the captain, in Lingua Franca, his majordomo received at the hands of the overseer of the slaves the gifts accompanying the letter of petition and listed them for His Highness:

Four robes of sable.

Two robes of lynx-skins.

One robe of ermine.

One robe of lynx-skins and crimson satin, its border of brocade worked with Persian histories, which had belonged to the King of Persia.

Six pieces of very fine brocade, of seven yards each.

Two boxes of fine porcelain of the Levant.

One box of Turkish handkerchiefs and napkins of silk, silver and gold.

One coverlet of silk patchwork embroidered with gold.

One coverlet of quilted brocade.

Twenty-four leather table covers.

A Damascus sword, mounted with gold, set with fine turquoises, which had belonged to Miriam's father.

Five gilt boxes with five hundred arrows, richly wrought with gold and enamel, and with their perfumed quivers and belts, which likewise had belonged to her father.

A quantity of feathers of all colors.

A little box of buttons of fine musk.

Twelve turban pieces of fine linen.

Two Alexandria carpets of fine silk.

Six very large carpets.

Six large felt housings for horses.

A bow, quiver and belt, all of gold and blue enamel, once belonging to Solyman the Magnificent.

A quantity of water flasks of wrought leather.

Four bottles of fine mastic, from Scio.

Twenty-four Damascus daggers, mounted with gold, silver, turquoises and rubies.

One large ball of lapis lazuli.

The Turkish captain explained his presence and himself—he belonged on the staff of Ali Pasha but had been invalided home from the fleet, before the battle. With many and profound gestures of homage, he handed to Don John the petition with which he had been charged by the orphaned daughter of the great Pasha.

Don John took the message from the hand of the

captain with no outward show of emotion, but leaving the officer in charge of de Soto retired at once to the privacy of his apartment.

His pulses beat fast against his temples as he sat down before a table and broke the seal of Miriam's letter. What, he asked himself, could have happened. Had Mahomet arrived? Had Miriam surmised his own identity with that of her slave lover, Parda? Was she now in danger and sending an appeal for protection? The death of her father would expose her still more to the passions of her degenerate sovereign.

All of these reflections crowded one and another on his feverish sensibilities as he opened the letter. To his surprise, he found it written in Spanish and realized at once that it had been put into his tongue by a hand other than Miriam's. But so keen was his hunger to grasp its message that he gave this no further thought as he read:

"Great Lord: After kissing the ground upon which Your Highness treads, that which the poor and miserable orphan desires to make known to Your Highness, her Lord, is, how grateful she is for the news current in Constantinople, that you are to free our servant Mahomet and are to send him with tidings of how, after the death of my father and the rout of our fleet, my poor orphan brothers remained alive in Your Highness' power; for which I pray God to grant Your Highness many years of life.

"That which now remains, my lord, for me and all of our family to do, is to entreat Your Highness by the Soul of Jesus Christ, by the life of Your Highness, by the head of your mother, by the soul of your father the Emperor, by the life of His Majesty the King your brother, to do us the grace and charity of

granting liberty to these poor orphans. They have no mother, and their father died in battle with Your Highness; they depend solely on your protection and pity. As a courteous gentleman, for so all men bespeak you, as a pious and generous prince, take pity on the tears I shed by the hour together, over the affliction of my brothers, and the death of my father, and grant me this grace.

"Of what I have been able to collect of the esteemed trifles of this court, I send Your Highness a present which I entreat you to accept. It is far from being worthy of Your Highness, but my means are now slender, and may Your Highness not regard the poverty of the offering, but generously accept it as a pledge of the good-will with which it is offered. Again my Lord, I beseech Your Highness, by the spirit of Jesus Christ, to do us this charity—to set my brothers free. Because in doing this good deed, even to those who are accounted enemies, you will be esteemed liberal and compassionate; and since, beholding their tears you are pleased—so it is commonly said—to send Mahomet to inform us of their being alive, and of your honorable treatment of them (which the whole of this court considers a great favor and for which it is ever praising the goodness and magnanimity of Your Highness), nothing is wanting to complete your renown but that your Highness should do us this grace and grant them their liberty.

"The slave of Your Highness and the poor sister of the sons of Ali Pasha kisses the hand of Your Highness.

"Miriam."

Buried in sombre thought, Don John sat long at his table. He clutched in his hand Miriam's letter. What

a bitterness of fate that the poor girl whom he had unwillingly orphaned, should now be obliged to beg the lives of her innocent brothers at the hands of one to whom her slightest wish was dearest law.

What had happened? Evidently, the gossip of Messina and Rome had reached the ears of the Turkish court while he was struggling with the delays and the diplomatic difficulties over freeing Mahomet—thus anticipating his endeavor to be first in putting his own message into Miriam's hands.

This, though involving chagrin, could be borne. He bent over the letter again. He read and re-read her moving words of supplication, asking himself all the while, could they really be addressed to him? Something about it all seemed so unreal, so grotesque that it revolted him. And that he should find himself now impotent to dry her tears, made him feel how with so much power, he could yet exercise so pitifully little of a dearest wish. The letter was not in her handwriting, but the last line, the signature, in those strange characters, was her very own. He kissed it again and again in the loneliness and longing it brought to him.

Obviously, she had not surmised that in her supplications she was addressing her Parda. To her, the Victor of Lepanto was only the cruel and stranger Prince of the House of Austria, one who had brought destruction and woe upon her house and upon her country—though this latter thought, Don John held had no real meaning, since the brutal Empire of the Turk was not her rightful country, and he, himself, was now only waiting to restore her to her country and its rightful sovereignty.

Until time brought that longed-for day, he could only possess himself in anxious patience and cherish an anxious hope.

CHAPTER LVIII

SUSPENSE

THE Turkish captain, pronounced by Don John's friends a decent fellow, after being hospitably entertained by his enemies—and incidentally being escorted all over the fleet, to show him how little damage it had suffered at Lepanto and how fit it already was for another brush with an Ottoman armada—left for home, most favorably impressed and bearing rich presents and a letter to Miriam—though Don John's hope was that before it could reach the Marmora, she would be safely on board his ship and on her way to his arms.

What to do with her own regal array of gifts—the gifts of which poor Miriam had been so prodigal—perplexed Don John. But he solved his problem by calling in her young brother of whom he had grown very fond, and telling him they were all for him until his sister should again claim them. The utterance was somewhat cryptic, but it left the subject just where Don John wanted it left until he could reveal more.

Reluctant though he was to part with them, it was felt by those about him that the two youthful prisoners being of such blood, should pay a visit of respect to the Holy Father. They were accordingly despatched with an escort and their servants to Naples enroute to Rome, in order that they might be back in time for Miriam's hoped-for arrival at Messina.

The approach of winter brought rough weather and with it increased anxiety to the impatient lover. Every

storm that swept the sea brought fresh alarms to his wrought-up sensibilities and he who could face a hundred galleys unafraid, suffered with every *tramontana* that blew. It was during one of these protracted storms that Don John, looking from a palace window on a January morning just after daybreak, descried a galley with the high peak and stern of a Turkish vessel, struggling to make the harbor without being swept on the rocks.

Without delay, he ordered aid sent to the hard-pressed mariners and he himself prepared hastily to proceed to the fleet. The strange vessel made the channel safely and as it neared the flagship, in the driving rain, it was seen to be the galley of Karakosh.

Excitement ran high for many rumors had been raised among the captains and men concerning the Commander's secret mission despatched to Constantinople and his anxiety in awaiting its return.

With ill-concealed impatience, Don John pacing the quarter-deck of the Royal awaited the longboat that would bring Figueroa and Pedro to him.

The two, when they stood before him, rain-drenched, met the eye of Don John with expressions on their faces that brought no hope to his heart.

"Your Highness," said Figueroa, "painful as it is to report to you the failure of our mission, we have no choice but to do so. We have not been able either to bring with us the object of our quest or to find any trace of her whom we sought.

"On reaching Constantinople," he continued, "and presenting our credentials, we were received with every mark of consideration and laid before the grand vizier, Sokolli, our story and our petition. He heard us with respect but likewise with marked incredulity. 'Pure fiction,' he assured us with a confident smile. 'It is im-

possible that Don John of Austria should ever have been in Constantinople. It is our business to know all who come and go, from the highest to the lowest, and I repeat he could not have been, in any capacity, in the service of Ali Pasha.'

"I pointed to Pedro who stood at my side. 'Here,' said I, 'is the man who was his companion during all the months that he was here—question him, Your Highness.'

"He did question Pedro very sharply and at great length. When he could no longer take refuge in skepticism, anger followed. Then he realized he must face the situation raised, by our presence, with the letter from you; and relapsing into his lethargy, he put to work agencies to investigate.

"I must say for Sokolli, Your Highness, that in so far as I can trust my judgment, he acted in good faith and aided us as best he could.

"Our first course was to visit the villa on the Marmora. In town, the palace of the Pasha, the harem, all was intact—this we learned before we landed at the villa.

"But at the beautiful estate of the Pasha on the Marmora—with which Your Highness has told me, and Pedro has told me, you were so familiar—all was confusion.

"The villa was in the hands of the servants; its beloved mistress was gone!"

The words, like a stab to the listener, only served to hold his emotion under control.

"And let me say," continued Figueroa, "what measures of care I took to make certain that I should learn the truth. The Turkish captain and his soldiers, under my orders, I would not allow to land: they were left in the pinnacle at the pier. Only Pedro, myself, and

the secretary of Sokolli walked to the villa. There, Pedro, who knew and was known to all of the older servants, spoke apart and freely with them. This was the substance of their story:

"When the news of the destruction of the grand fleet at Lepanto and the death of her father was reported at court, Miriam held herself in complete seclusion and refused to see anyone for many days. When the further news began to be noised about the court that her brothers were alive and prisoners in the hands of Your Highness, and that you purposed to send them to her, she refused to believe the report until assured by the French ambassador that these were facts.

"Upon this assurance she put aside her grief over the death of her father, to do what she could for her brothers. She sent to Your Highness, with the grand vizier's approval, a letter begging the liberty of the two boys and to it added a collection of such treasures as she possessed and could buy with her jewels. These reached you?"

Don John nodded, stonily.

"Thus far it was not hard to trace the story. Beyond this point, difficulties arose. From Pedro—as well as from you—I learned that Miriam had long had reason to fear the Sultan himself. As a young woman of extraordinary charm, of Albanian blood and type, she had been regarded with longing eyes by the monster who ruled the Empire; and only dread of her father, his greatest soldier, had restrained him from laying hands of violence on her before Ali Pasha's death. Such attempts as he did make to possess himself of her, had been made covertly, through pirates, one of whom, a Spanish renegado, had been reported killed at Lepanto.

"With her father gone, the Sultan, professing to

believe her in danger so far from the city, ordered her to close the villa—where, the servants averred, she had purposely been placed by Ali Pasha to remove her from the intrigues of the court—and to repair to her town palace where the servants were, she believed, merely Selim's tools.

"When this order came, Miriam called to her the chief eunuch, Muley, an old and devoted slave of her father, and her own personal servant, Fatima; and after a few hurried preparations the three, one night, disappeared.

"On the following morning, a small galley that she had used for pleasure trips, was missed; and also, twelve Christian slaves belonging to the villa. Putting these circumstances together, Your Highness may draw conclusions as the household of the villa drew them.

"What appeared certain, however, was that six men could not handle the galley in winter on the open sea. It would be a desperate venture, but we must remember that the daughter of the Pasha was placed in a desperate position by the situation that confronted her and that no chance is too desperate for a galley slave to take when liberty is the stake for which he plays.

"What follows, Your Highness, is conjecture, with only a single unhappy fact to guide it. The missing galley was found, a fortnight afterward, beached not far from the entrance to the Dardanelles. But no trace of crew or passengers has been found, so far as we could learn.

"What happened? It seems hardly possible that a Turkish vessel could have picked up the galley or its survivors and brought them back to Constantinople without our being able to hear at least some rumor of the occurrence; for I spent money without stint to penetrate underground sources of information. Yet in

a land where the bowstring and scimitar work so freely and so silently, it is always possible to bury a secret too deep for resurrection.

"Could they have been picked up by a Greek trader and speeded on their escape and freedom? Such a thing is quite possible.

"A storm at sea, sudden and severe, may have overwhelmed the galley, thus undermanned. If so, Your Highness, the waters that cover the brave Pasha may likewise hold the secret of the fate of his fair daughter."

CHAPTER LIX

INTRIGUE

MADRID, gayest of capitals, was awaiting the Lion of Lepanto. As if to make amends for harshness in earlier years, the King now sought to honor his natural brother. Since in Lepanto he had brought a crowning glory to Philip's reign, the equivalent of a triumph for him was spoken of in the capital; and word that he was soon to set foot again on Spanish soil, set the country wild.

Don John's very first care on hearing the report of Figueroa was to despatch light galleys to every port of the Levant that was open to his ships. These were manned by captains charged to make diligent inquiries for the missing three of the dead Pasha's household and to spread far and wide word that enormous rewards were promised for information concerning them.

Having put into motion every possible activity of this sort, despite the gnawing fear that death had been in all probability their fate, Don John, leaving Figueroa with Pedro at Messina, reluctantly set sail on the King's orders, for Spain.

Could he have dreamed only two short years before of such a homecoming, it would have swelled his heart with emotion. Now, there lay one morning before him, the familiar roads of Barcelona, with every craft of the harbor shipping gayly dressed in his honor, with the artillery of every war vessel vieing with that of the forts in the thunder of salutes in his honor—yet it all found him unable adequately to respond to its inspira-

tion. The one thing in his home-coming that could have filled his cup of joy was missing and the cup was empty.

The King at Madrid found a great change in his famous brother. The months that had passed since they met had brought lines to the face of Don John. His responsibilities had sobered and aged him. At twenty-five he was ten years beyond his years. Of his younger, carefree, wilder self nothing remained but the charm of manner, the high consideration for the feelings of others, the amiable forbearance and patience of a prince, which made him the most loved man of his day by those of all ranks—courtiers, diplomats, ambassadors, soldiers and sailors—with whom he came in contact.

Philip asked many questions about the great battle. He talked freely and showed a knowledge of the details and a grasp of the strategy involved that surprised his martial brother.

When the conversation turned on the Albanian offer of a throne for Don John, the King was once more the cautious sovereign and spoke in the veiled language of diplomacy. He dwelt particularly on the opposition to be looked for from Venice and how unfortunate any dissension among the European powers would be in the face of the Turkish menace.

Don John, sensitive to this sort of diplomatic disapproval—the bane of every soldier's life—chilled somewhat under these familiar excuses for inaction. Perhaps they left him less disposed to take up in a spirit of camaraderie the lighter vein to which his brother now turned.

"What are these stories, my brother," asked the King, "that I hear about a romance in your life during your detention in the Orient?"

His Majesty asked the question in the mildly cynical manner of the man of the royal world, familiar with the foibles of women, and as if ready to listen to a good story.

If he expected to hear merely such a story, he was as disappointed as he must have been surprised, at the manner of his brother's brief recital. It was serious, not frivolous; reserved, not familiar; dignified, and not of the type of *conte* for which the King was listening.

"But how!" he exclaimed, when Don John had done—he was still smiling, his brother quite grave. "I do not understand. A young woman of great attraction and warm heart, yet modest, chaste, and possessed of all the virtues—in a Turkish court in *these* days? And my gay young brother, attractive and enterprising! I do not understand! How did you manage?"

"How should Your Majesty expect me to manage with a woman I meant to make my wife?"

The King opened his eyes. There was a suspicion of tartness in his brother's tone, as well as a sting in his words.

"Your wife?" he echoed, in displeasure.

Don John stood unmoved. "My wife," he repeated firmly, "had she not been torn from me. It is the curse of my birth, Your Majesty," he added, and there was added bitterness in his thought, "that it has been just low enough to bar me from the thrones of my ancestors, and just high enough to fetter me when I seek my will."

The King was too politic to revert to the topic of Albania; but he took up speedily with his ministers the project of getting Don John married.

Between the visits of princes, generals, admirals,

diplomats and churchmen, small leisure was left to Don John and little of this for matrimonial discussions. It was only when his intimates brought up the subject that he was willing to speak of it at all. The project of the Queen-Dowager of France, Catherine de Medici, to marry her daughter, Marguerite, to him, he frowned upon when Sandro broached it.

"Marguerite is a woman of wonderful charm," urged Sandro. "Henry of Navarre has his eye on her, but we can manage that. She is keen of wit, gracious in manner, golden-tongued——"

"The better to seduce the unwary," interposed Don John.

"—of noble feature—tender tones, dark eyes, queenly beauty——"

"What!" exclaimed the Prince impatiently as Sandro persisted. "Does Catherine expect me to marry her amorous daughter and compete with the Duke de Guise for my own wife's favors? Leave the wench to the Huguenot!"

"Clearly," grinned Sandro to Requesens, "he is not favorable to a Medici alliance."

When the proposal of a matrimonial alliance with Mary Queen of Scots was laid before the restless hero, he listened with more respect. As a young and generous prince he had sympathized with her in her distress and looked with favor on her right to the English throne. He was assured through her most confidential advisers of her own warm interest in his career and an English party hoped in this way to make Don John their sovereign; a war that should bring him new honors was a necessary part of the project.

The hook was well baited both for his royal ambitions, his sympathies and his martial ardor—only memories and a vague hope interposed to restrain him,

but these were enough to dull the edge of acceptance —Don John put the intermediaries off; and his emissaries continued to comb the reaches of the great White Sea for a trace of his lost Miriam.

But the youthful favorite of the queens and courts of Europe was still further to be besieged. The crown-matrimonial of England was dangled before him through Elizabeth's envoy, Leyton. He was assured that Queen Elizabeth would prefer him to the Duke of Anjou and that he might, if he wished, aspire to her hand.

Requesens, deeply impressed with the importance of such a project, brought the Prince this message. But only to meet with a cynical rebuff—and Don John's impatience rarely boiled over into cynicism. "No objection, whatever, Requesens," said he, "to marrying another red-head. But one bastard in the family is enough."

For a time the matchmakers of Europe were discouraged. But the King, taking note of the increasing moodiness of his very valuable brother, resolved to drag him out of his despondency and to do so invoked his royal authority.

He decreed for Don John a triumph, with its attendant pageantry and the resources of the court were enlisted for the signal spectacle.

To precede it, a royal ball was gazetted. At this, the presence of Don John was strictly enjoined. "Let some of our beautiful women," suggested the King, "drag him from his despond. Surely they cannot all have lost their charm for a melancholy warrior."

"Why not," demanded the King at another moment, of his brother, "resign yourself to the inevitable? Is the world and its diversions to be lost to us because of the memory of merely one of its treasures? You

pay scant compliment to your own countrywomen if you continue so rigidly to seclude yourself from their society. To-night, at the ball, for the sake of my court, for my sake, and your own sake, shed some of your natural gaiety on the scene. Drink again, brother, of the cup that brought you distraction in your happier years."

Upon such suggestions, the intoxication of the night and the glamour of the ball gradually worked. Don John made an effort to forget himself and essay the rôle of his earlier, wilder days.

And with the revelry at its height, Dona Adelita, the Countess of Velasco, her dark eyes with quite the same soft and penetrating appeal, entered the room.

Don John and his early inamorata had not met for seven years; but time had not dulled her charm of manner nor as yet claimed the freshness of her cheeks. Rather, the interval had rounded out her youthful femininity and added suppleness to her always graceful figure.

She paused at a point in the room perfectly chosen for Don John's greeting and waited for it.

When he came up she met him with a critical coldness and as if they had parted but yesterday.

"And after all of my trouble, Your Excellency, you are not wearing the colors of a friend—at least, once a friend—who took especial pains to send them to you this evening."

Don John was quite honest in his disclaimer. "But I have received no colors from anyone—I am quite at a loss."

"Did I forget to send them? No, I'll be truthful, as Your Excellency always was—I was afraid to send them lest you refuse to wear them."

"And so," returned Don John evasively, "cheated

yourself out of the flowers with which I should have acknowledged the distinction."

"If I summon enough courage, it may be next time. And now," she added, with a suggestion of gentle regret and reproach, "my own young hero is all the world's hero. He is the tongue of Europe. But I am not going to join the mob of flatterers. It is bad enough that earlier friends must listen to his praises as if he were a stranger! It makes me homesick—the old days were such happy days. But you will come to see me? And I shall hear from *your* lips—not everybody's—about that awful and wonderful battle? And that marvellous, lone woman who was in it—la Bailadora. I was jealous enough of the huzzy to have scratched her face for playing her part so well. That part belonged to me. Who, than I, had a better right to shed just one little drop of her blood for the great warrior!"

Her woman's instinct felt the change in him even as he smiled and listened. "I hope, oh, how I hope," she urged, "they haven't spoiled you. How does it make you feel to be so pampered?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "Old."

She laughed delightfully. "The remedy is to renew your youth. I suppose you've lost your key to the garden gate? But Madrid will, of course, see that you have other garden keys." She shot the implication at him with a keen glance.

"There are doubtless many keys," he smiled gravely. "But only one youth."

She used all her arts to enlist his interest as the night wore away—coyness, reserve, raillery, freedom. He made an effort to fall into the spirit of the time and place and be once more his irresponsible self of

earlier years. Why not banish his depression and seek diversion with the women of the court?

Despite his efforts he was conscious of some repugnance—remembrance of other scenes, other eyes and of another voice that touched deeper feelings. It was only after much gaiety that he could seemingly cast memories off, drink to the Countess' eyes, step a galliard with her and laugh as he used to laugh.

The King rallied the two when he saw them together. "Admirable!" he exclaimed. "Mars and Venus must never be estranged."

"I'm not Mars," retorted Don John, "—just a vagrant sailor—more used to salt water than angel-water."

Philip shot a knowing glance at Velasco. "Feed him on your famous truffles; wake him with Jerez and Malaga."

"Oh, Your Majesty!" protested Venus, dreadfully abashed.

She fell to laughing. "He is dreadful," she declared when the King had passed. "He actually speaks as if I served truffles to attract admirers!"

"That, everyone knows, would be unnecessary," interposed Don John.

"What I should have said, had I dared," she bubbled, low and in confidence, "was that I should like to know whose truffles His Majesty is eating just now—no doubt chiefly those of his good friend, Doña Marie. No," she exclaimed, virtuously resolved, "all that my warrior shall have to-night is the fragrance of a cup of Arabian coffee to soothe and give him—perhaps put him to—sleep. I used to like to watch him asleep. I'm going home; I will brew our coffee myself. Come!"

All eyes were fixed on the lion of the evening. The

women had already perceived the battle Venus was waging for her Mars and keen-eyed, awaited its issue. Would he take her from the ballroom?

She saw and quite comprehended the interest of her rivals.

He hesitated. "Surely, Don John," she pleaded, "you will not shame me by deserting me before these envious cats."

He started as if from a torpor. "Assuredly not," he exclaimed promptly. "Let us go!"

Together they descended the grand staircase to the courtyard, where the carriage of the Countess was summoned. Adelita still had misgivings. Her intuition warned her that a further critical moment lay ahead. Would Don John, acting so strangely this evening, go home with her? She fluttered about him like a bird, throwing out a screen of small talk and inwardly angry at her coachman for being so slow in bringing the carriage around.

The footman at last opened the door for her and bowed. Adelita laughingly stepped into her pet luxury and sinking into the cushions moved well to the side to make room for her distinguished escort. He stood for an instant with some words of apology on his lips as he looked in on her. She was too wrought up to catch more than merely their import—he was not coming!

A wave of wrath swept over her. Her eyes blazed fire at Don John. Then pride asserted itself. She appeased her fury with a reckless mental promise of revenge. And with a smile, exclaimed, as he bowed to close the carriage door:

"Good night, Don Joseph!"

CHAPTER LX

JOURNEY'S END

THE sun that rose on Don John, returning to his home from the court ball, rose also on two women in a large, shabby room, in a poor quarter of Madrid. One was fat and wrinkled; her companion, younger, slender and delicate of feature, was still in the freshness of actual youth, but her face wore an expression of hardship endured and hope deferred that had robbed it of all but pathetic sorrow. She reclined on a well-worn couch, her elbow resting on a pillow while her hand supported her head, and she gazed into vacancy with an expression of heartsick longing.

The older woman, Fatima, had just risen from her pallet on the floor and was busying herself about the fireplace when a knock on the door was answered by her call and a little and curiously wizened man entered the room, bringing in his hand, wrapped in some green leaves, a fish for breakfast.

Fatima regarded the offering with contempt. "Fish!" she exclaimed scornfully. "Is that all you could bring, Muley? Do these dogs of Spain eat nothing but fish?"

Muley had evidently done with retorts. He only shuffled about and poked the scant fire that was struggling for life on the hearth.

Fatima, being unable to provoke him to words, mumbled on to herself. "And this is the breakfast, the

Rose of Morning must eat! She, daughter of the vizier Pasha, with her army of servitors in her own home, quick to move at her slightest nod—she must walk these stony streets—may the curse of Allah rest on them—crying day after day: "Don John! Don John!

"Why, everybody in this accursed city of infidels is named Don John: already we have found a dozen. Dogs of Christians! They take her money; they rob her of her jewels. Yet, she would persist, she would hope—and now with everything gone, how shall we eat to-morrow? Oh, great Miriam! Mother of God! The Christians call upon you; so we call—help us!"

It was thus that old Fatima, faithful but shrewish, after a long journey of incredible privations, found herself in the capital of Spain with her Miriam of the far Marmora—Miriam, spent in health and strength, but with a spirit still unbroken by disappointment.

Only the fortitude of a devoted woman had triumphed over all that had been endured on that journey and brought her to the scene of her hopes—Madrid. Unable to speak any language that those about her could understand, save the words, "Don John—Madrid," and with two companions who could speak nothing but Turkish, she had patiently conquered each formidable difficulty of her toilsome journey, only to reach its end spent by her supreme effort.

Still patient with Fatima's outbursts, she lay on her couch, gathering such strength as she could for another weary day of search for her lost Don John. Her voice when she spoke from the couch at intervals, pierced the hearts of her two servants with its far-away gentleness and her tender consideration of them before herself. On one point only it was useless to attempt to

move her: the resolve to hunt for her lover until either she should find him once more, or death should bring to her a longed-for release from suffering.

Muley stood regarding her, quite miserable with sympathy and apprehension. "You are not strong enough to go out, to-day, Rose of the Morning," he ventured to say; "perhaps to-morrow."

"Oh, but I am better, Muley; much better. I will go to-day." Her voice seemed so faint, it was as if her words came from another world.

"Not to-day, Highness," he ventured on. "Because to-day there is a grand procession through the streets. The great Spanish general—our deadly enemy—is to be honored. Do not go out—you might profane those great innocent eyes that your father so loved, by a sight of the cruel giaour. He came home with honors and much rejoicing because he won that fatal battle that cost us of your father's household, and all our country, so dear. Do not venture abroad on this evil day. Let the infidels rejoice by themselves at our humiliation and defeat."

"But Muley: to-day more people will be out. More people will hear my voice——"

"More of those devil boys and girls will follow you —jeer at you! My heart breaks for my mistress!"

"But I have wakened just this moment, Muley, from a sweet dream. It has even made me happy. A beautiful queen came toward me—fair and robed in blue. She brought a young man in a strange vesture of white and gold wearing a strange head-dress—and while she spoke to me, she pointed to him.

"'Because you bear my name, Miriam,' she said to me softly, 'I have come to you with your son whom you shall one day see in this wise at my altar. Take courage!' Before I could speak, before I had opened

my eyes—they were gone. Only a strange perfume lingered to tell me of my vision."

Poor Muley, little and wrinkled, looked with unutterable sadness on his wearied mistress. This, he thought, is the end: the mind of our princess is going —death will come soon.

At daybreak that morning, Don John, home from the royal ball, had thrown himself on a couch. His gentlemen of the chamber were come now to wake him and to dress him for the triumph.

Next, Pedro, waiting at the door and dressed in all the prize-money finery he could load himself with and carry without staggering, was admitted. He brought a petition:

"For myself, Highness, as well as for faithful Diego and rheumatic Gaspar," he said, bowing profoundly.

"What is it now?" demanded Don John.

"That we may ride together, to-day, in the great procession, and take 'Austria' with us, Highness."

"What have you to ride in?" asked the Prince.

"Diego has a cousin whose brother-in-law has a wine-truck and——"

Don John frowned. "Do you want to make a joke of me?"

"I do not, Highness, and I told the old man it would not do at all," declared Pedro, retreating as fast as possible from an untenable proposal. "What I myself suggested," he added, with a lightning-like shift of position, "is a float, rigged up like the longboat that 'Austria' sleeps in—and we three riding in it with him." Having said this much and narrowly watching the Prince's face, the while, he timorously added, "Would that do?"

The suggestion met with unexpected favor. "Not so

bad," nodded Don John, laughing with his gentlemen. "This you may do."

"And may we follow just behind Your Highness in the great procession?"

Don John frowned a little, but conceded much. "You are hard to get rid of, Pedro. Show your float to my gentlemen. If they approve it, you may. Be off!"

The sun rose over an excited city. From every palace, every house and every window and from every coign of vantage in the streets, fluttered gay draperies and decorations. Crowds dressed in gala costumes carrying toy trumpets, rattles and confetti, thronged the route the procession was to follow.

At last it came—announced by fanfares and trumpets—with its pikemen, musketeers, guards, dragoons, bannermen, trumpeters, knights and baronets, its horses richly caparisoned, and its impressive lines of Turkish cannon, Turkish standards and Turkish spoil from Lepanto.

Following this, came long lines of Turkish prisoners —thousands of them—Janissaries, soldiers, captains, beys, governors, pashas, sailormen and gunners. Many were chained together two and two, and dressed in red and yellow livery. And behind them, in an open coach, rode the Victor of Lepanto, Don John of Austria, wearing the Order of the Fleece, a robe of furred velvet, crimson breeches and white boots.

As this multi-colored pageant made its way through the thronged streets, two women, mournfully dressed in so gay a crowd, walked apart, followed by a shrunken little old man. Behind them came a gang of noisy boys who with ever fresh glee, jibed and railed at the queer trio. The younger woman nevertheless cried out, as she and her supporting companion passed house after house and block after block, two words,

ever repeated, never varied: "Don John! Don John!"

Merrymakers sought now and again to silence her, but she hushed her cries only to take them up when those who would molest her had passed. Gradually the long procession had drawn up to her, still uttering her monotonous cry, the two words strangely pronounced, but in tones that thrilled and pierced the ear: "Don John! Don John!"

Men regarded her in astonishment. Women eyed her in alarm and turned their babies away from her. Children laughed and hissed at her. But she would not be still. A Turkish prisoner in the ranks, a musketeer of her own father, looking, heard and saw Miriam. He recognized her and shouted toward her. She heard her name called. But before she could fix her eyes on him who called, the crowd had passed between them, and his chains had dragged the gesticulating prisoner ahead. Excited by the incident, which stirred her with a new hope, Miriam continued to cry out the words written on her heart. The young rabble scoffed, the tuckets sounded, the cymbals clashed, the crowds cheered, and the procession moved on.

But in every gala scene of excitement, and amid moments of the utmost confusion, there may come certain intervals in which the accents of a single clear, high voice will carry above the din of many sounds and many voices.

The central figure of the imposing pageant, Don John of Austria, rode alone amid the splendor of trappings and the glitter of victory's magnificence. At such an instant, there fell suddenly on his ear the sound of a voice that startled him from a revery as he rested a moment between his acknowledgments of the plaudits of the people.

The sound woke him from his abstraction and, roused, he listened. But he heard the sound no more. Again he continued mechanically to salute those who called wildly on him as to one who had saved their country from bondage and their children from slavery, and again he sank back on his cushions.

For a moment, until the populace could regain breath, the clamor about him died. And once again that strange, strong cry smote his ear—this time like an electric shock.

He started to his feet wild, commanding his escort, sharply, to halt. And with eyes sweeping the surprised crowd, raised his hand as if to speak or to implore silence.

Awed by his sudden pallor, and the majesty of his aspect, the shouting throng stood mute. They waited for his words. But he held his breath. For again, clearly, came the piercing cry. It was his name, and his name—he knew it now—from the lips of Miriam. The flash of his eagle-like eye swept the crowded street.

"Don John!" came once more the agonizing words of the fainting girl.

Like a madman he sprang from the carriage, pushed a rapid way toward a vision, of which he had caught a glimpse among the babbling children—toward Miriam, who now, spent, rested momentarily from her despairing appeal.

The amazed throng parted before him. His princes and gentlemen, puzzled and alarmed, sprang from their posts to follow. But before all, Don John, with bounding steps had reached Miriam's side. He caught her in his arms, and looked into her face—it was, indeed, she. He called her by her name, and in a delirium of amazement, held her fast.

Dumfounded, the terrified girl tried to repel his em-

brace. Still he devotedly called her name. And still Fatima tried to tear her frightened child from him. Still Miriam begged for mercy, when Don John, snatching the helmet from his head, flung it to Pedro, at his side, pushed back his hair, called her name again, and held before her eyes the ruby ring.

With a scream, she recognized her long-sought lover. He clasped her passionately, rained kisses on her trembling lips, enveloped her in his velvet robe, and lifting her above those who crowded around carried her in his arms to his triumphal car.

It was Pedro who, bareheaded behind his master, made the appeal, as the procession moved on, that explained to the astonished multitude what had happened—how at that moment their prince had found his lost love—Pedro who tucked the dizzied Fatima and Muley into one corner of his bizarre float and told the gay princes on horseback who surrounded him, the story of this strange reunion.

But Don John of Austria had neither eyes nor ears for aught save that incredible treasure which he held at last, fast and hungrily, in his arms.

THE END

POST-WORD

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In such passages of *Spanish Lover* as call for historical sanction, I have followed chiefly Sir William Stirling-Maxwell's *Don John of Austria,* London, 1884, two volumes. Some of the more picturesque and intimate details of the career of Don John are gathered from *Jeromin,* a study of the Spanish hero by El Padre Luis Coloma, S.J., Bilbao, 1927.

But inasmuch as the novel form does not lend itself patiently to quotation marks and page footnotes I have reluctantly confined myself to this general acknowledgment of credit to these two sources—invaluable for any reference to the life of Don John. Stirling-Maxwell's work, a monument of scholarly research and literary beauty, has been, unfortunately, long out of print. I trust that Padre Coloma's intimate and appealing *Jeromin* will at no distant date be available in an English translation.

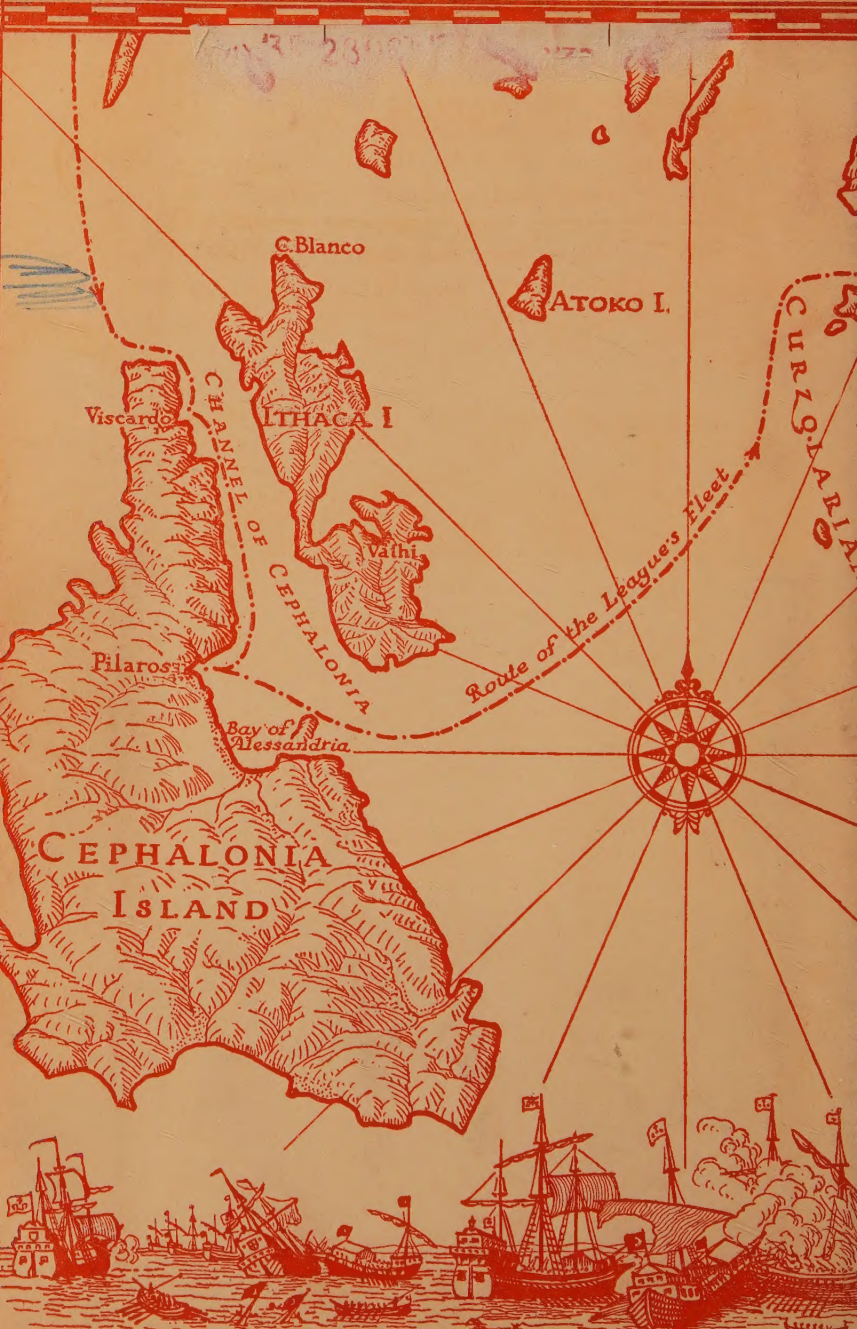
Acknowledgments are likewise owing to Newman's *Historical Sketches,* London, 1901, article: "The Turk"; to Rev. Alban Butler's *Lives of the Saints,* New York, 1855, article: "Pius V"; and to Ludwig von Pastor's *Geschichte der Päpste,* vol. VIII, article: "Pius V," Freiburg, 1925. The quaint text of the letter of Seraskier Pertau Pasha to his soldiers is taken from Knolles, *History of the Turks,* London, 1634; that of Ali Pasha's daughter, together with the list of her offering of presents to Don John, is to be found in Stirling-Maxwell.

The curious incident of the meeting of Don John

and the pet lion—which figures in so many of his contemporary portraits—is related by Don Luis Zapata de Calatayud in his *Miscellanies.*

By far the ablest study of the battle of Lepanto is that of Admiral Jurien de la Gravière, *La Guerre de Chypre et la Bataille de Lepante, Paris,* 1888, two volumes, with excellent maps. It is de la Gravière who brings out clearly a point that Stirling-Maxwell seems to have minimized, namely, that to Don John, at Lepanto, must be given first credit for retrieving the disaster of his "terribly mismanaged" right wing under Doria, after he himself had already won the action of his *bataille,* or centre.

To my friend, Padre John Moclair, of Salamanca and Hollywood, I am indebted for valuable assistance in research; and to Dodd, Mead & Company, Inc., and to the author, for permission to use the lines quoted from Mr. G. K. Chesterton's martial poem, "Lepanto."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Atoko I.
Viscardo
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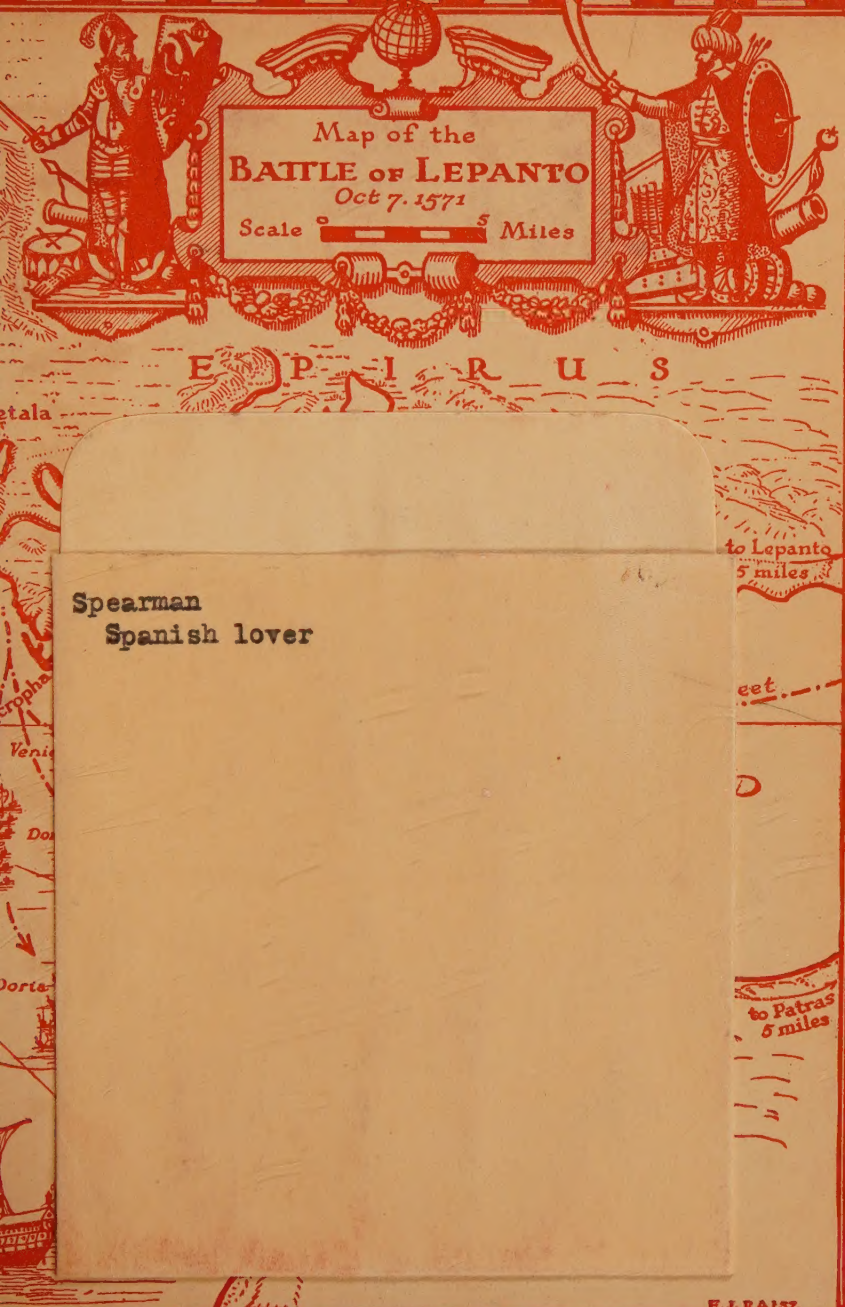
Channel of Cephalonia
Vathi
Pilaros
Route of the League's Fleet
Bay of Alessandria
Cephalonia
Island



Spearman
Spanish lover